

U.S. postpones decision on economic aid to Israel

WASHINGTON (R) — The Reagan administration has postponed action on an Israeli request for \$800 million in emergency financial aid, pinning approval of the extra funds on increased Israeli efforts to mend its ailing economy.

U.S. officials said the Israeli government had so far not come to grips with an economic crisis that includes dwindling foreign reserves and an 800 per cent annual inflation rate.

The State Department announcement Friday that it was deferring action came at the end of two days of separate U.S.-Israeli talks here on economic and military aid.

The \$800 million Israel is seeking in emergency aid comes on top of \$1.2 billion already provided in the current fiscal year.

As a special concession to Israel's economic crisis, the administration handed over that aid in a lump sum at the start of the year, instead of spreading the payments over 12 months.

State Department Spokesman John Hughes said the decision on the emergency request had been

postponed until Israel adopted an effective "economic stabilisation programme" and Washington had determined whether to support the programme.

Israel is also seeking nearly \$2 billion in economic aid for the 1986 fiscal year starting next October.

But U.S. officials said the administration, needing to make massive budget cuts of its own, wanted to maintain current levels.

The administration, however, is expected to be more sympathetic to Israel's military aid requirements.

Although the United States wants to sell Arab countries more arms, Mr. Hughes repeated the administration's pledge to prove Israel with military aid at levels that would maintain its security and its "qualitative edge."

The coalition government of

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres is seeking military aid of \$2.1 billion in the next fiscal year, compared to \$1.4 billion in the current year.

Mr. Hughes did not say what economic measures Israel would need to take to satisfy the administration and receive the emergency economic aid. But officials said privately that those taken so far were inadequate and Israel had to gain monetary control, cut government subsidies and drastically reduce its budget.

U.S. officials said the United States had not asked Israel to take any specific economic measures although several plans had been discussed.

Israeli diplomatic sources said Israel favoured a more gradual approach to its economic problems amid concern over the impact that stringent austerity measures would have on unemployment, now standing at six per cent.

They said increased unemployment could spark social unrest and cause skilled people to leave the country to seek jobs elsewhere.

APU begins 5-day meeting

SHARIFA (Petra) — Electronic postal services between Arab countries will be introduced following the launching of the first Arab satellite, Secretary General of the Arab Postal Union (APU) Hussein Rashid Hamdani said Saturday.

Mr. Hamdani was speaking at the opening session of a five day meeting of the APU Executive Council, which started here on Saturday.

Participants will discuss a number of issues, among which are the establishment of an Arab printing press for printing postal stamps and unifying dates of anniversaries on which postal stamps are issued.

Participants will also follow up on the implementation of the last session's resolutions and will discuss involving postal unions in implementing the technical aid programme and the Afro-Arab cooperation in postal fields.

Other subjects to be discussed at the meeting are a report by the Arab Postal College's Board of Trustees and the report of the Postal Affairs Committee on introducing express air mail services.

Arab-Americans plan to aid famine victims

WASHINGTON (USIA) — The Arab-American Relief Fund has announced the first unified Arab-American national programme to join with international efforts to aid victims of famine in Africa.

In a Dec. 20 press conference, Dr. James Zogby announced: "This is the first time Arab-Americans are going to be directing significant energy and resources towards a crisis in another part of the world." Mr. Zogby is a former director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee and Vice Chairman of the Jesse Jackson for President campaign in this year's Democratic Party presidential primary election campaign.

He told reporters that more than 50 prominent Arab-Americans have endorsed the project which will channel emergency aid to the victims of the famine in East and Central Africa.

"We feel that it is necessary at this time for a unified Arab-American response to the crisis in Africa," Mr. Zogby said.

He reported that the Arab-American Relief Fund, a project of the American Arab Relief Fund, has designated Africa

as the major recipient of the funds. This highly reputed group is the major black American relief agency.

He also pointed out that Africans and Arabs have long historical ties. "African States are Arab States because more than half the Arab people are African people. Therefore it's important for us to respond and we have received tremendous support from our own community."

"As Arab-Americans," he continued, "we feel a special need to respond to hunger and the denial of human rights to these African peoples."

Addressing the desire to end apartheid in South Africa, Mr. Zogby said: "Black Americans stood with us in support of our brothers and sisters in Lebanon. We can do no less."

Mr. Zogby said, "Arab-Americans and black Americans need to continue to work in solidarity to build a better future for their brothers and sisters both at home and abroad."



James Zogby

hunger and starvation in Africa. We are also gratified by the strong Arab stand against apartheid."

Jean R. AbiNader, former executive director of the National Association of Arab-Americans, reported that various Arab-American organisations and religious bodies have already begun working together to raise funds.

According to AbiNader, the Islamic community has raised several hundred thousand dollars. "We see the Arab-American effort as merely a beginning of a heightened concern by Arab-Americans to deal with these issues and to address them as part of the world view," he said.

AOAD draws up food security plan

AMMAN (Petra) — The Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD) has drawn up a plan for the provision of an Arab food security programme setting up a scheme for establishing an Arab centre to improve sweet agricultural production, studying the investment laws of the Arab World and the feasibility study for producing edible cacti.

According to a report prepared by the organisation, several projects were finalised in the Arab countries.

The report also includes studies on dry and deserted lands in addition to reports on seven training courses in which 250 Arab representatives took part to study the fight against animal diseases and plagues.

The organisation has prepared 157 projects in regards to food security.

U.S. still stands behind Reagan's 1982 initiative, official says

WASHINGTON (USIA) — The United States still stands behind President Reagan's two-year-old Middle East peace initiative of 1982 as a basis for negotiation, said U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth Dam at a Washington briefing.

Mr. Dam was questioned by reporters at the Foreign Press Centre early this week on a host of international issues, including the Middle East and India.

Mr. Dam was asked about the contribution of the Arab League's eight-point Middle East peace plan of September, 1982 — the so-called Fez plan. Among other things, it called for the creation of a Palestinian state, withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied since the 1967 war, and placing the West Bank and Gaza under United Nations control for a transitional period.

Mr. Dam said the Fez plan was an important forward step at the time, but "it did not, in our judgment, represent a basis for negotiation. We felt that the Reagan plan did provide such a basis and we stand behind it."

In the Reagan plan, the president called on "the Arab states to accept the reality of Israel," and he insisted that "the United States will not support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, and we will not support annexation or permanent control by Israel."

"Now," said Mr. Dam, "the Israeli government will have to speak for itself."

Mr. Dam rejected the idea that the United States has been pressuring the Arabs more than the Israelis, as a questioner implied. "I don't accept the fact that we've leaned more on one side or the other," he said, and added this

explanation: "We are not in a position to impose peace on the Middle East. What the United States is able to do is to talk to both sides and to try to bring about negotiations, which we think is the only basis for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East."

Following are excerpts from the Middle East from the question-and-answer session on Dec. 18:

Question: Abdul Salam, Moassaa Arab-American media service.

Mr. Secretary, you just said, if I quote you right, that the United States is ready to move in the Middle East when the parties are more amenable or flexible in their way. A couple of questions. Aren't you, or are you, satisfied that the Arab World has come out, forward, with their proposals for peace, which emanated in the Fez summit conference, at a time that the Israeli government rejected completely and totally President Reagan's peace initiative? And from the other point of this question, what has Israel done or suggested, or proposed, on the table, for discussion, ideas or thoughts in order to bring about a peaceful settlement or move in the Middle East?

Mr. Dam: Well, the Fez summit was an important step forward at the time. On the other hand, it did not, in our judgment, represent a basis for negotiation. We felt that the Reagan plan did provide such a basis and we stand behind it. Obviously, there are those who would like us to negotiate about the Fez declaration as though we had to move off the Reagan plan. We don't plan to do that, because we don't think that would be a step forward. Both sides had to be able to come to the table and, as you know, in the end King Hussein came to the conclusion that he was

not prepared to come to the table.

Now, the Israeli government will have to speak for itself. All I am saying here is that the parties, who — first of all, we stand for the proposition that we're not going to be able to resolve the problems in the Middle East without negotiation. For negotiations, both sides are going to have to come to the table. We can talk about what that means, if you like, but I think the Israeli government will have to speak for itself. It's a new government.

Question: I would like to follow up because this is for the sake of, not to be polemical about it, but you know, you've been a little bit, like they say, you are leaning on the Arabs much more than you are leaning on the Israelis, to come with their proposals.

The Fez summit conference resolutions were the Arab side of the story. The Reagan peace initiative was your side of the story. The Israelis didn't come out with their side of the story. And you, all the time, asking those people who are ready to negotiate to give more and give more and give more. And you've never asked the Israelis to come up with their proposals, in that way.

Mr. Dam: Well, I don't — I'm not trying to assign blame, and I think the Israeli government is going to have to be prepared for negotiations about peace. We've made that clear. That's what the Reagan plan is, a proposal that there be such negotiations. And I don't accept the fact that we've leaned more on one side or the other. We are not in a position to impose peace on the Middle East. What the United States is able to do is to talk to both sides and to try to bring about negotiations which we think is the only basis for a just and lasting peace in the Middle

East.

Question: Sir, Reza Bakay, Israeli Radio.

Sir, right now an Israeli delegation in the State Department is asking from the U.S. around \$4,000 million grant for the next year. Now, there have been indications that this year the administration will not grant the amount, mainly because of two reasons. First of all, Israel has not done enough to cure its own economy. And the second reason, because of the freeze here in the budget. Can you comment about those two reasons?

Mr. Dam: Well, I don't think we have taken any position on any particular numbers. What we have said is that with regard to the economic assistance, we are prepared to be of assistance, provided there is a serious and credible economic programme, announced and implemented by Israel. And that's what we're going to be talking to them about.

But that programme is for them to decide. We may comment on it, but it's their programme. And then I think, and only then, are we really able to address the question of numbers. To the extent that there is a credible programme, it seems to me that the numbers may not have to be as large. To the extent that there isn't a credible programme, I suppose it's not even a question of money. The problem won't go away.

So, I think that it's a little premature to be talking about specific amounts. We are also talking to them, of course, about other forms of assistance beyond purely economic, and that's a somewhat different dialogue, involving other kinds of questions.

Question: A followup. Will the freeze in the American budget have anything to do with the aid to

Israel?

Mr. Dam: Well, I think it shows how difficult it is for the United States, not just with regard to Israel, but with regard to any country in the world, to do what we would like to be able to do. We are in an extremely difficult budget environment and we are cutting domestic programmes right and left. So, I think that the environment, from that standpoint, is not an easy one, from the standpoint of thinking about increased expenditures. But that's a general proposition. That has nothing specifically to do with Israel. But obviously Israel is having its difficulties at the same time we have this difficult budget environment.

Question: Amal Barazi Al Watan Al Arabi, in Paris.

Sir, going back to the Middle East, can we say that, for example, the Reagan initiative had passed by time and it's viewed that you should put some amendment to it, and second, why the Americans don't share a position against the Middle East conference, international Middle East conference?

Mr. Dam: Well, with regard to the Reagan plan, no, I don't think that we would contemplate an amendment of it. The point is not for one side or the other to negotiate with the United States as to what the United States' plan is. They should negotiate with each other. And all we would be doing is probably making it more difficult for eventual agreement between the parties directly involved, to — making it more difficult for that agreement to be achieved, if we were to try to bias our proposal in one way or the other. After all, our proposal in one way or the other. After all, our proposal is not a blueprint which has to be adopted. Quite the contrary. It is a

suggestion of a basis for negotiation. It is an opinion about certain things that, if one side or another insists on are simply non-starters, and will prevent negotiations, but it's also a statement that what the parties actually end up agreeing to is not something that we are going to stand in the way of.

So, I don't see any advantage to be achieved in trying to negotiate the Reagan plan one way with one party and another way with another party. It doesn't accomplish anything.

Now, with regard to the international conference, I don't think there's any evidence an international conference on the Middle East would make any contribution to a resolution of the problems of the area, and particularly I think the notion that inviting the Soviet Union into negotiations would play a constructive role is, I think, positively contradicted by the evidence. So, they haven't shown any willingness or ability to play a constructive role in the Middle East. So, those are the reasons why we have been opposed to the conference.

Question: Does that mean you are insisting on the American solution for the Middle East, away from another superpower, with the way?

Mr. Dam: To the contrary. We are insisting that the parties directly involved get together and negotiate it, rather than allowing ourselves to divert negotiations into some global-type conference in which large speeches are made and other agendas are important. We are not trying to impose the Reagan plan on the Middle East, as I said in answer to the first question. Quite the contrary. It is a

question: All the indications are that Mr. Murphy (U.S. assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs) is facing a dead-end in his mission, at present, in the shuttle between Beirut, Israel, and Damascus. Can you pin down some of the reasons why he's not making any progress? What's the position of the Syrians, for example, and what do you see might follow if the talks between Israel and Lebanon fail?

Mr. Dam: Well, those are difficult questions and I wouldn't want to gloss over those difficulties. We have been addressing, again, on a day by day basis, this question and I think that Assistant Secretary Murphy has made one or two statements himself.

It's obvious that there's not going to be a prompt resolution of the situation there. But this is not fundamentally a U.S. responsibility. While it is true that we are trying to be helpful, but we cannot impose any solution on the parties. If the parties want us to — all the parties, Syrian, Lebanese, Israeli — want us to play a significant role here, we're prepared to do it. But this is not shuttle diplomacy, as we have sometimes seen it, in the Middle East. This is not something where we're trying to impose a process on the situation. There is a process there and we're trying to be helpful, by meeting with the various parties.

It is clear that both Syrians and the Lebanese are not willing to take certain steps, such as with regard to UNIFIL, that the Israelis are insisting on.

On the other hand, it is also clear, I think, that any agreement by Israel is going to require satisfactory arrangements on the security of Israel. And, as you know, the security of Israel is a fundamental tenet of American

foreign policy. So, we have a situation in which the parties are moving together very rapidly, but that's because of their own, individual policies.

Question: What are the alternatives to that?

Mr. Dam: Well, I think we have to see what the alternatives are. It seems to me we have to continue to have a dialogue on this subject with regard to Lebanon, in the form of another.

Question: Ambassador, I don't you feel that actually have reached a deadlock in the Middle East? My name is Hani Farad. Al Ahram newspaper, Cairo. The Israelis have refused the Reagan plan. The Americans have refused the international conference. The Americans are the Israelis refuse the participation of the PLO. So how do you move in a situation like that? And then are you ready to discuss an international conference which may lead to direct talks, as it happened if Geneva which led to Camp David talks. Are you ready also to cooperate with Jordan in the military field?

Mr. Dam: Well, we again believe that it's important for the parties to talk to each other. Now, don't see that the international conference — there's any reason to believe that the international conference would lead to the progress on the peace process. Now it's true that we have not seen the last year. But let's remember one of the reasons for that was that Arafat lost the support of his organisation with respect to encouraging King Hussein to declare he was prepared to go into the peace process. I think Israel, since last year, has been forthcoming on this subject and this is a period of reassessment. The focus of attention at present is on Lebanon. I hope, I hope, is a short-term

(Continued on page 5)

TV & RADIO

JORDAN TELEVISION

MAIN CHANNEL

17:00 Koran
17:15 Cartoons
17:45 Children's Programmes
19:00 Local Programme
19:30 Programmes Review
19:40 News Programme
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Arabic Series
21:25 Tomorrow's Programmes
21:35 Jerash Festival Highlights
22:00 Arabic Series
23:00 News in Arabic
23:10 Highlights continued

FOREIGN CHANNEL

18:00 French Programme
19:00 News in French
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Towards 2000
21:10 American Caesar - Eps. 3
22:00 News in English
22:15 Magnum

RADIO JORDAN

355 KHz, AM & 99 MHz, FM
or partly on 9500 KHz, SW

07:00 Light Music
07:30 Newsweek
08:00 Morning Show
10:00 News Summary
10:05 Morning Show
11:00 Pop Session
12:00 News Summary
12:05 Pop Session
13:00 News Summary
14:00 News Bulletin
14:10 Instrumentals
14:30 Science Report
15:00 Concert Hour
16:00 News Summary
16:05 Instrumentals
16:30 Old Favourites
17:00 Listeners' Choice
18:00 News Summary
18:05 Jazz Hour
19:00 Newsweek
19:30 Date with a Star
20:00 Evening Show
21:00 News Summary
21:55 News Summary
22:00 Evening Show
23:00 News Summary
23:05 Evening Show
24:00 News Headlines

BBC WORLD SERVICE

639, 720, 1413 KHz

06:00 Newsweek 06:30 Juke Box Dory
06:45 Financial Review 06:55 Reflections 07:00 World News 07:09 24 Hours: News Summary 07:30 Good Books 07:45 Letter from America 08:00 Newsweek 08:30 Jazz for the Acting 09:00 World News 09:09 24 Hours: News Summary 09:30 From Our Own Correspondent 09:50 Letter from London 10:00 World News 10:09 Reflections 10:15 The Pleasure's Yours 11:00 World News 11:09 British Press Review 11:15 Sports Service 12:00 World News 12:09 Religious Service 12:40 World News 13:09 News About Britain 13:15 From Our Own Correspondent 13:30 Baker's Half Dozen 14:00 Play of the Week 14:45 Lunch With George Bernard Shaw 15:00 World News 15:09 24 Hours: News Summary 15:30 Nineteen Eighty-Four 15:45 The Sandi Jones Request Show 16:30 Classical Serial: Whose Daughters 17:00 Radio Newsweek 17:15 Concert Hall 18:00 World News 18:09 Commentary 18:15 Press Barons 18:45 Letter from America 19:00 World News 19:09 Metroland 19:40 Reflections 19:45 Sports Round-up 20:00 Newsweek 20:30 The First Half 21:00 World News 21:09 Metroland 21:15 Radio Theatre, The Artillery Terrace Hot Fire Stamp Again 22:00 World News 22:09 24 Hours: News Summary 22:30 Sunday Hall-Hour 23:00 News Summary 23:15 The Pleasure's Yours 24:00 World News 24:09 24 Hours: News Summary 24:15 Financial Reviews 06:00 Reflections

VOICE OF AMERICA

NW 1200, KHz, 7200, 9565, 11740, 11925 & 12510

06:00 VOA Morning News, Informal Presentation of Popular Music with Feature Reports, Interviews, Answers to Listeners' Questions, Science Digest, Sports News at 30 minutes past the hour, 06:15 Focus 17:00 News 17:10 New Horizons and New Products 17:30 Music USA 18:00 News 18:10 International Viewpoints 18:30 Special English News and Features 19:00 News 19:10 Critic's Choice 19:30 Issues in the News 20:00 News 20:10 Focus 20:30 Special English News and Features 21:00 News 21:10 Sunday Report 21:30 Music USA 22:00 News and Editorial 22:15 Concert Hall 23:00 News 23:10 News Horizons and New Products 23:30 Studio One

WHAT'S GOING ON

TODAY'S EVENTS

EXHIBITIONS

* An exhibition of ornaments by Sabah Urtag Al Rashdan at 5:00 p.m. at the Regency Palace Hotel.
* Palestinian national exhibition of documents at the Royal Cultural Centre (until Dec. 24).

FILM

* "Say Amen, Somebody" at 7:00 p.m. at the American Centre.

CONCERT

* An evening of songs and music (local) at 6:00 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre.

CULTURAL CENTRES

Royal Cultural Centre Tel. 6610267
American Centre Tel. 44371
British Council Tel. 36147-8
French Cultural Centre Tel. 37009
Goethe Institute Tel. 41993
Soviet Cultural Centre Tel. 44203
Spanish Cultural Centre Tel. 24049
Turkish Cultural Centre Tel. 39777
Haya Arts Centre Tel. 665195
Hussein Youth City Tel. 667181
Y.W.C.A. Tel. 41793
Y.W.M.C.A. Tel. 664251
Amman Municipal Library Tel. 36111
University of Jordan Library Tel. 43555

MUSEUMS

* Folklore Museum: Jewelry and costumes over 100 years old. Also mosaics from Madaba and Jerash (4th to 19th centuries). The Roman Theatre, Amman, Opening hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5 p.m. Year-round. Tel. 51760.
Jordan Archaeological Museum: Has an excellent collection of the antiquities of Jordan. Jabel Al Qal'a (Citadel Hill). Opening hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (Fridays and official holidays 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.). Closed Tuesdays.
Jordan National Gallery: Contains a collection of paintings, ceramics, and sculpture by contemporary Islamic artists and a collection of paintings by 19th Century orientalist artists. Montazah, Jabel

Luwelbdeh. Opening hours: 10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Closed Tuesdays. Tel. 30128.
Martyrs' Memorial (Military Museum): Collection of military memorabilia dating from the Arab Revolt of 1916. Sports City, Amman. Opening hours 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Closed Saturdays. Tel. 664240.
Popular Life of Jordan Museum: 100 to 150 year old items such as costumes, weapons, musical instruments, etc. Opening hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Closed Tuesdays. Tel. 37169.

SERVICE CLUBS

Lower Amman Club. Meetings every first and third Wednesday at the Holiday Inn, 1:30 p.m.
Phila Philadelphian Club. Meetings every second and fourth Wednesday at the Amman Hotel, 7:30 p.m.
Philadelphian Rotary Club. Meetings every Wednesday at the Holiday Inn, 1:30 p.m.
Rotary Club. Meetings every Tuesday at the International Hotel, 2:00 p.m.
Royal Automobile Club, Jabel Amman, Eighth Circle. Tel. 815261.

CHURCHES

St. Joseph Church (Roman Catholic) Jabel Amman, tel. 24590.
Church of the Annunciation (Roman Catholic) Jabel Luwelbdeh, 37440.
De la Salle Church (Roman Catholic) Jabel Hussein, 661757.
Church of the Annunciation (Greek Orthodox) Abdali, 23541.
Anglican Church (Church of the Redeemer) Jabel Amman, 41559.
Armenian Catholic Church Ashrafieh, 71331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Ashrafieh, 75261.
St. Ephraim Church (Syrian Orthodox) Ashrafieh, 771751.
Armenian International Church (Interdenominational) meets at Southern Baptist School in Shmeizani, 816534.

PRAYER TIMES

6:06 Fajr
06:35 Sunrise
11:35 Dhuhr
14:18 Asr
16:35 Maghreb
18:03 Isha

FOR THE TRAVELLER

AMMAN AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Alia International Airport at the Queen Alia International Airport, tel. (08) 53520, 53070, 53082, 53171, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

09:30 Aqaba (RJ)
09:45 Cairo (RJ)
09:45 Kuwait (RJ)
09:45 Jeddah (RJ)
09:45 Berlin, Larnaca (IF)
10:00 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:20 Beirut (RJ)
10:35 Riyadh, Dhahran (SV)
14:30 Tripoli, Larnaca (IF)
14:40 Kuwait (KU)
16:15 Baghdad (IA)
16:45 Los Angeles, Chicago, Vienna (RJ)
17:40 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:55 Frankfurt, Brussels (RJ)
18:00 London (RJ)
18:00 Paris, Rome (RJ)
19:00 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
19:25 Beirut (MEA)
20:40 London (BA)
22:20 Cairo (MS)
06:45 Cairo (RJ)
01:10 Baghdad (RJ)

DEPARTURES

05:45 Cairo (RJ)
06:05 Damascus, Frankfurt (LH)
06:45 Beirut (RJ)
07:15 Larnaca, Aqaba (RJ)
08:00 Damascus, Paris (AF)
08:15 Beirut (MEA)
08:45 Damascus, Rome (AZ)
09:45 Dhahran (RJ)
11:00 Vienna, New York (RJ)
11:45 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
14:30 Riyadh, Dhahran (SV)
15:30 Larnaca, Tripoli (LN)
15:40 Kuwait (KU)
17:15 Baghdad (IA)
18:30 Damascus, Larnaca (RJ)
19:40 Kuwait (RJ)
20:00 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
20:45 Cairo (RJ)
21:00 Abu Dhabi, Singapore (RJ)
21:10 Baghdad (RJ)
21:45 Baghdad, London (BA)
22:00 Bangkok (RJ)
23:20 Cairo (MS)
08:45 London, Berlin (IF)

MARITIME TRAFFIC

Home news

HEC amends community college course regulations

AMMAN (Petra) — The Higher Education Council (HEC) Saturday held a meeting under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Ahmad Obaidat and decided to introduce amendments to the regulations for public and private community colleges in Jordan.

According to the new amendments, HEC Secretary General Abdullah Al-Zubi said that such an amendment was essential in the light of the lessons learned from the implementation of the regulations for the first year of the community colleges. The amendments, which were approved by the HEC, provide for the following:

The amendment was initiated in accordance with the terms of reference of the HEC and in compliance with the provisions of the higher education law and its amendments.

According to the new amendment, all community colleges, whether public or private, have to apply to the HEC to obtain the approval for the introduction of new specialisations to be introduced during the following year, provided that applications are submitted to the council before Feb. 1 each year. The council, in accordance with the information collected, will decide on one of the following:

Either to approve the major field of study if the required plan and curriculum, which must be approved by the Ministry of Education, are available; or to approve to principle the field of specialisation if the council is convinced of its usefulness even if a teaching plan and a special curriculum are not available at the time of assessment, provided that the college concerned coordinates with the Ministry of Education for preparing the required plan and curriculum.

The amendment also states that a college cannot start teaching a new subject unless it obtains the final approval from the council, whose secretary general will also make sure that all the required facilities for teaching the subject are available at the college concerned.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Jordan, Iraq initial tomato paste deal

BAGHDAD (Petra) — Jordan and Iraq have initialled an agreement under which Jordan will export 2,500 tonnes of tomato paste to Iraq, the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, said Saturday.

The initial agreement was concluded during a meeting between a Jordanian delegation, currently on a visit to Iraq, and officials from the Ministry of Light Industries and the general installation for food industries in Iraq. The Jordanian delegation to the meetings comprises Dr. Amin Al-Khatib, the director of the tomato paste factory, Abdul Munim Al-Kurdi from the Ministry of Industry and Trade and Mr. Hassan Abu Aqilah from the Audit Bureau.

Ten injured in bus, car collision

ZARQA (J.T.) — Ten people were injured Friday as a result of a road accident along the Zarqa-Khau road. The accident took place when a Toyota bus collided with a Volkswagen car. Nine of the injured people were rushed to the military hospital in Zarqa for treatment and were released later, while the tenth, Jihad Awad, was rushed to Hussein Medical Centre due to his serious condition.

Hikmat, Wahbi discuss cultural week

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Culture, Tourism and Antiquities Taher Hikmat Saturday discussed with Egyptian Ambassador to Jordan Ihab Wahbi means of strengthening tourist and cultural relations between the two countries. They also discussed the necessary arrangements for holding an Egyptian cultural week in Amman next April.

King receives Chinese team

(Continued from page 1)

Vice Admiral Guven Erkaya was received Saturday by Gen. Sharif Zaid, who discussed with them scopes of military cooperation between the two countries.

No details were revealed on the Turkish delegation's visit. However, military cooperation between Jordan and Turkey have been so far limited to technical cooperation and military training.

On the other hand, Turkey is currently aiming to build a defence industry, including establishing an arms assembly plant in the Kirikkale area southeast of Ankara. With coordination with the United States, Turkey will soon be capable of building F-16 fighter jets, according to reports.

In October, Gen. Sharif Zaid made an official visit to Turkey where he held talks with Turkish Army Chief of Staff Gen. Necdet Uygur.

Jordan has been shipping for arms since the U.S. cancellation last year of a Stinger anti-aircraft missile deal with the Kingdom. France, England, the Soviet Union and Italy have been among the countries approached by Jordan for arms, but so far, there has been no indication the Kingdom has reached an agreement with any of these countries yet.

Sokolov named defence chief

(Continued from page 1)

Sokolov included an attack on NATO foreign policy, saying their aggressive actions... preclude a lessening of the threat of war.

Marshall Sokolov began his military career in 1932. He served in high command posts during World War II, including an armoured troop command, and as commander of the Leningrad military district from 1963 until 1967.

Mr. Sokolov, in his capacity as Soviet deputy defence minister, visited Jordan in 1977.

Meanwhile, police sealed off the centre of Moscow Saturday as mourners began to file past the flower-covered bier of Mr. Ustinov, whose body is lying in state in the Hall of Columns till Monday.

Hundreds of people queued in bitter cold to pass the open coffin. Relatives sat to the right of the raised coffin in the ornate green and white building near Red Square.



KING VISITS GHQ — His Majesty King Hussein, the Supreme Commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces, Saturday paid a visit to the Army General Command where he conferred with the Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief General Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker on issues of interest to the Armed Forces. King Hussein was received upon arrival by Gen. Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker, Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Fathi Abu Taleb and his aides.

New planning methods aim to ensure national development, Nsour says

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Planning Abdullah Nsour Saturday said that it is time to reconsider the methods used in future development planning and to introduce changes so that future plans reflect a comprehensive perception of national aspirations and face challenges and new developments in all social and economic fields.

Development regions

Following analysis of the survey results, the minister said, the country will be divided into development regions and areas and comprehensive development plans will be drawn up for each region and area. He added that a data bank will be set up to include all information and data about each population gathering.

Dr. Nsour also pointed out that it has been agreed between the Ministry of Planning and Amman Municipality to draw up a working plan for the greater Amman area, which includes 12 cities and villages surrounding Amman, which would include a detailed survey of all infrastructures, services and land use.

Achieving social justice and equal opportunities in education and work, making social advancement, distributing other development benefits according to the framework of the country's historical and cultural heritage as well as facing external challenges are the main goals of the forthcoming five-year (1986-1990) development plan, Dr. Nsour explained.

The minister concluded that there is a tendency towards decentralisation in the preparation and implementation of the forthcoming plan to expand public participation so that the plan can be more effective.

British children's entertainer delights Jordanian youngsters

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Entertaining children is an art perfected over years of practice, and it also takes quick wits and patience, according to Derek Moore, a professional children's entertainer based in London.

Moore, 47, who is in Amman to do a four-day stint at the Amra hotel's specially built "Children's City", has been in the profession for over 26 years.

He describes his performance — five or six half-hour shows a day — as a combination of conjuring tricks and wits, rather than magic. Judging from the audience response and repeated attendances by children as well as a few adults, Moore is quite an attraction at the "Children's City", which opened its gates Thursday.

One casual look at the "entertainer," a member of the "Magic Circle," would not give any inkling that he has a lot of tricks up his sleeve. Rather, he looks like a school teacher. But once he gets going with his show, the story is different.

The "Chinese linking rings," "the disappearing penny," "the rope trick," "the magic band" and "the captive" are only some of the highlights of Moore's show.

"Of course, I do have a live rabbit in London to pull out of my hat," Moore said. "But quarantine regulations did not permit me to bring it along."

Perhaps the most captivating item among his tricks is the "spinning plates" where children themselves can take part along with the entertainer.

Moore, who worked for the Bank of England for 22 years before taking up entertaining children as a full-time profession, developed his stage tricks as a

hobby since his teens.

"An average of two or three shows over the weekend and three others during the week is my normal routine in England during the year," Moore says. "During Christmas time it goes up to two or three shows a day." His audiences are normally children in the age bracket of eight to 12 years, Moore says.

No language barrier

Asked whether he found any language barrier while performing in Jordan, Moore said "not very much." "But of course," he added, "the nature of my tricks is such that it is more for the eye to see than the ear to hear."

Moore is on his first visit to Jordan — to the first Arab country in the Middle East for that matter. The normal attendance for his shows in England — at schools, children's birthday parties and special occasions — is about 30 to 50 children. However, there had been occasion he had been called upon to perform before over 2,000 children in a holiday camp, Moore said.

He prefers to call his show not as a "magic show" but as a "slight of hand" which happens to be a bit too fast for the audience's eyes.

Talking about the "Magic Circle," which has an international membership of over 1,500 people, Moore said the organisation was founded over 100 years ago.

In its membership roster since then it had famous names such as David Nixon, Tony Hooper and Robert Harbin — all of whom are now dead. Paul Daniels and Alan Shaxson are some of the world-renowned "magicians" who lead the "Magic Circle" of today, Moore said.

Incidentally, he added, "we do not have any lady members because we want to keep our secrets."

Artistic movement will be studied, minister says

Hikmat refutes cultural deterioration claims

By Abdullah Al Otum and Sa'ad G. Hattar
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Minister of Youth, Culture and Antiquities Taher Hikmat has denounced claims that there is cultural deterioration in Jordan. He also said that there is cultural and art activity in the Kingdom although he said it is confused and uncoordinated due to the growth of quantity at the expense of quality and the intertwining of various sectors dealing with the culture.

In an interview with the Jordan Times and Al Ra'i, the minister said the coming few days will witness a general conference to study the cultural situation in order to reach definite recommendations to rectify the course of the cultural movement in Jordan.

Mr. Hikmat went on to say that the cultural atmosphere has recently been experiencing a "recession," which he said was probably caused by an overflow of cultural production with no specific connections: an overflow which was accentuated due to the absence of a critical approach which is the base for every evaluation of any cultural activity in the world he said. "Despite this, we could improve our culture through the foundation of a basic critical movement which will be capable of rectifying the incorrect situation of cultural activity," he added.

Rural regions

Speaking about the role of the rural areas regarding cultural events, he said that the ministry is agitating centralising cultural activities and that a new trend is to pave the way for every part of the Kingdom to participate in cultural activities. Mr. Hikmat added that important cultural conferences and seminars will be held in governorates and that the ministry will encourage cultural seasons in the rural areas as well as supporting cultural clubs and forums in these areas.

"As for the theatrical activities and plastic art exhibitions, they will also be spread to the governorates and villages through a scheduled programme," he said.

"Speaking about the Jordanian presence on the international culture level, he said that the ministry believes in an international Jordanian role based on open cooperation and that Jordanian representations to international activities should be at an appropriate level. "However," he said, "in order to secure an appropriate presence and activity on the international level, the government is always ready to overcome technical and financial obstacles and I do not think there is any financial problem."

National loyalty

Answering a question on the ministry's role in raising the sense of loyalty and belonging among citizens, Mr. Hikmat said that there is a specific perception in developing the sense of cohesion to this land, this country and its elements. He added that the ministry is committed to finding a diversion in this field by "pumping life to the veins and branches which extend between the land as mother and to Jordanian citizens as buds on the land." Mr. Hikmat said that the mass media could play a great role in this field, especially Jordan Television, while the ministry's responsibility is to achieve the real sense of belonging for the Jordanian citizen and "this should not be restricted to sloganeering or cheap publicity but to a genuine cultural job." He said that from this point, the ministry will be writing special programmes for Jordan Television on the issue. Mr. Hikmat went on to say that he believes and there is a lack of formative elements for a national identity and Jordanian sentiments. Thus, it has been the responsibility of the information media to lead the cultural and information movement during the last two years," he said.

Answering a question about the new organisational charter for the ministry, he said the joining of culture, tourism, and antiquities in one ministry came as a result of efforts and studies by the Royal Committee for Administrative Development and in the light of experience, the committee adopted this formula because antiquities is an important part of the national belonging and hence it is part of their culture. On the other hand, he added, tourism is connected with antiquities because the main reason for visiting Jordan is to visit the ruins of our ancestors and to sighness. From this point the Royal Committee founded in appropriate combining the three activities in a ministry, he said.

Responding to a question on whether the Directorate of Libraries, Documentations and National Archives (DLDNA) should combine with the Department of Culture and Art, Mr. Hikmat said this plan is being subjected to an evaluation process after which he shall decide the future of the directorate. Nevertheless, he said.



Taher Hikmat

"We can say that library activities in Jordan have not yet reached their aspired role, although there are hundreds of qualified experts in that field." He added that as soon as the evaluation process on libraries is over, a swift amendment will take place.

Cultural policy

Mr. Hikmat said that the ministry does not claim to have a cultural policy, because culture cannot be covered by a specific policy to cope with all its aspects. Nevertheless, the ministry has a working plan which will be crystallised within the next month, he said. This plan will include a complete coordination and essential standing and aim for the ministry, he added.

Speaking about the ministry's programmes and aims the minister said that there are certain activities which the ministry is planning to launch. Elaborating, Mr. Hikmat said that these activities include concentrating on quality and organising a cultural dialogue with the Western culture. He said that in order to overcome the impetus which Western culture is spreading throughout the world, "we ought to have stable position in this dialogue emanating from certain and steady roots in our cultural heritage. Therefore we call for a dialogue based on 'equal standing' which means that each culture is of a certain value and has something to give to the other," he said.

"The ministry is trying to make a stand against the negative, mixed cultural values invading us, but nevertheless we welcome the positive values."

Defending a claim that there is no specific trend at the ministry Mr. Hikmat said: "We are not living in a totalitarian country or a regime based on state rule. There are cultural aspects and lines for a cultural movement and from this point we do not wish to impose a narrow cultural policy. We deal with the aspect from a point of having a distinguishing feature of openness and originality."

CONDOLENCES

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It is time to curb Jordan's trade deficit

By Fahed Fanek

DURING 1983, the gross domestic product of Jordan reached JD 1487.5 million. The value of goods and services exported amounted to JD 639 million; thus making the value of local production used within the country reach JD 848.3 million. At the same time, the total value of imported goods and services was JD 1467.7 million, which makes total expenditure on both consumption and investment around JD 2316 million.

Based on these aggregate figures, we can conclude that only 37 per cent of the disposable goods and services util-

ised in the country have a local origin, whereas 63 per cent have a foreign origin and are imported from the outside world.

According to the World Development Report, issued by the World Bank (1984), the commodity exports of Jordan in 1982 (including reexport) was \$753 million (or JD 265 m) against imports of \$3241 million (JD 1141 m) or 23 per cent. In other words we import 4.3 times the value of our national exports and reexported commodities leaving a net deficit in the balance of trade as big as 77 per cent of the total

importation.

The report states also that Jordanian visible imports were growing during the decade 1960-1970 at the reasonable rate of 3.6 per cent per annum, which is compatible with the growth of population. However, during the following period of 1970-1982, imports were exploding at the compound annual rate of 13.5 per cent, which is not only ahead of population growth but also ahead of the real economic growth.

Since imports are five times the volume of exports, the latter must grow five times faster

that the rate of growth of imports just to keep the size of the trade deficit constant.

As a matter of fact the exports grew at 10.8 per cent per year in the sixties, and at 17.7 per cent per year during the seventies and up to 1982.

Admittedly, these are good percentages of growth, but they are way below what is needed to offset the increase in the mushrooming imports. The trade deficit went wild and jumped to the level of JD 891 million.

The deterioration in our balance of trade took place des-

pite the fact that the first socio-economic development plan 1973-1975 was aimed at reducing the trade gap. The deterioration continued during the second plan 1976-1980, which was more modest than the first, and which was aimed at reducing the deficit not in absolute figures but in ratio to the gross national product, i.e. reducing the relative importance of the trade deficit.

Events continued to take an opposite direction, in every year during the last 10 years. We were getting further and further from the self-sufficiency

in our consumption, because the applied policies and practices were unfortunately not in harmony with the declared targets of the development plans.

In the past, we could afford to carry a huge deficit and live with an ever mushrooming gap between exports and imports, thanks to the flow of Arab financial aid and remittances from Jordanian expatriates abroad. Now that Arab aid is no more than JD 125 million a year, we have no alternative but to rationalise our foreign trade sector.

Iran slams the door again

FOR A moment, a flame of hope flickered for peace in the Gulf. But it was not to light up. Iran did the expected: It slammed the door, which appeared half-open Friday when its foreign minister sat down with his Iraqi counterpart to draw up an Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) document calling for peaceful negotiations to end the 51-month-old conflict. What appeared to be a breakthrough to the world on Friday was dashed Saturday by Iranian Foreign Minister Akbar Velayati when he said the Tehran regime is bent upon pursuing the war until the Iraqi government was toppled.

When Habib Chatti, the erstwhile secretary-general of the OIC, happily announced over the weekend that "both Iran and Iraq have subscribed to peace mediation" by the Islamic body, the Islamic foreign ministers gathered in Sana'a might have thought they had found the answer to one of the most serious issues facing them. But only a moment later they found themselves back at square one when the adamant Iranian stand manifested itself again through the words of Velayati.

Yet, the disappointing Iranian stand, albeit not a total surprise to anyone, was not only a slap in the face of the OIC but also shattered the hopes of peace of both the Iranian and Iraqi peoples who have so far paid the highest price for Tehran's ambitious goals of weakening the eastern flanks of the Arab Nation.

It is not clear yet whether Mr. Velayati's icy words on Saturday reflected a change of mind from the conciliatory attitude on Friday when he took part in drawing up the OIC document or a misunderstanding on the part of the OIC on the Iranian leadership's position. In any case, finding an answer to this question is secondary at this point since it is clear now that the Sana'a meeting failed to revive Islamic mediation to end the conflict. The OIC failure could only mean one thing: blood will continue to be shed in the Gulf and instability and insecurity will prevail in the region.

The ominous prospects of the situation in the Gulf, with its enormous proportions of threat of foreign intervention, makes one wonder about the wisdom behind the intransigence of the Iranian leaders.

They should have realised by now that its declared aim of overthrowing the Iraqi government is no closer to realisation that it was at the outset of the war four years ago. There is no doubt, however, that by continuing the war on its borders, Ayatollah Khomeini and the ruling clique in Tehran have managed to consolidate their hold on Iran by crushing their critics and opponents through rallying the people against "an external enemy" that "threatens the country and the Persian people." But if this achievement, by any standards, be considered a "success", it is no doubt a short-term "victory", because, in the process of extolling the Iranians to take up arms against Iraq, Khomeini has alienated his "revolution" and deprived it of its potential allies. Ironically enough Khomeini also managed to bring together the right-wing supporters of the Shah and the communists in a common front against the "revolutionary" Tehran regime.

And in the backdrop, the ayatollah is amassing the anger and hatred of the Iranian people who have been the ultimate victims of the war, paying with their blood and money to get the war machine going. Now, tomorrow, or the day after, Khomeini and his clique are going to reap the harvest of the seeds of destruction and hatred they themselves planted and nursed along with the continued refusal to talk peace.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: Threat to holy places

THE WARNING by Chairman of Higher Islamic Council in Jerusalem Sheikh Sa'aduddin Al Alami against the danger threatening Al Aqsa Mosque and all holy places in the occupied territories should prompt Arabs to adopt a responsible stand capable of deterring the Zionist gangs from violating the sanctity of the holy places.

However, and despite all flagrant Zionist provocations against the holy places, Arabs have not so far lived up to their responsibilities and merely satisfied themselves with statements of protest and denunciation, appealing to others to protect Al Aqsa Mosque and the holy places.

The lack of a unified and decisive Arab and Muslim stand and limiting such a role to lodging complaints and launching appeals are one of the worst forms of unjustifiable Arab disability.

The danger threatening Al Aqsa Mosque, the holiest Muslim shrine in Jerusalem and the holy places put Arab and Muslim leadership before a religious, civilised and historical responsibility which they cannot avoid.

Al Dustour: OIC below minimal requirements

DESPITE THE fact that the Iran-Iraq war constitutes one of the most important issues on the agenda of the Organisation of Islamic Conference's (OIC) meeting, the Palestine question is also the main cause of Arabs and Muslims and the subject of the first test of the abilities of about one billion Muslims to actively confront a series of dangers touching upon the core of their faith.

However, the outcome of the regular Islamic meeting, neither conforms with the size of dangers threatening Al Aqsa Mosque, nor with the great challenges facing hundreds of millions of Muslim people all over the world. Thus, like all previous meetings and conferences, the OIC meeting could not so far respond satisfactorily to the challenges and threats.

Therefore, we are aware that any resolutions the Sana'a meeting might take on the Palestine question will remain ineffective if the Islamic world does not awake from its deep slumber and unite its word and will in a manner conforming with its real concerns and strong challenges.

Sawt Al Shaab: Overall sanctions against Iran

NEWS FROM the North Yemeni capital of Sana'a, where the OIC is currently holding its ministerial meeting indicates that the conferees are experiencing difficulties in reaching a conciliatory formula that can be a basis for a general communique about the Muslim world and Muslim solidarity.

Since the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war, big problems have been disrupting joint Islamic work, thus obstructing its march and placing obstacles in the face of tackling priorities.

Conferees are trying hard to reach at a conciliatory position while aggression on Iraq is still going on, as established and evidenced by the OIC's goodwill mission.

It's time Muslims embarked on practical measures for putting an end to Iran's aggression through adopting a number of overall measures and sanctions which can positively contribute to ending the bloody tragedy.

Leading American official upbeat on foreign policy outlook

WASHINGTON — 1984 was a fruitful year for U.S. foreign policy and the United States has "laid a solid foundation for the future," in the view of the U.S. deputy secretary of state, Kenneth Dam.

But in a statement at a year-end briefing for journalists at the Foreign Press Centre in Washington, Mr. Dam was less optimistic about the Middle East — "It has not been the best year for Middle East diplomacy." He cited the cancellation of the Israeli-Lebanese agreement as a disappointment.

Mr. Dam also focussed on East-West relations and arms control, friendships and alliances, resolution of regional conflicts and the international economy.

In response to a question concerning European reaction to the U.S. Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), in view of the upcoming U.S.-Soviet arms talks, Mr. Dam said reports of criticism had been "greatly exaggerated" in the press and that there has been "a very healthy dialogue on this subject" between U.S. and European leaders and scientific experts.

He stressed that the SDI is a research programme still far in the future.

"Obviously there are concerns about the implications of SDI for the strategic position of Western Europe," Mr. Dam said. "Any change in technology automatically brings about a concern about whether the ideas of the past are still fully valid. But to a certain extent these concerns have to do with the future that's not yet here and won't be here for a long time."

"This is a research programme," Mr. Dam said. "It's fair to say on the whole it is a blackboard-type research programme. There have been some

tests but not really of what most people are thinking of when they talk about SDI. Even tests are some years off."

The deputy secretary said, "we've tried to have a full dialogue with Western Europe on the SDI. We've had many meetings of experts. It's been discussed at the foreign minister level. Delegations have come to the United States. We welcome all of these opportunities. But I don't see that somehow a split has developed between the United States and Europe on this subject."

Following are major excerpts from Mr. Dam's statement:

President Reagan's achievements in his first term have yielded great foreign policy dividends. Restoration of the military balance has enhanced our negotiating power and the effectiveness of our diplomacy. Our economic recovery at home has fueled global recovery that is well along in Europe and is picking up steam in many less developed countries.

Thanks to the revival of our national pride and self-confidence, American leadership is again respected throughout the world. In short, we've restored and strengthened our strategic posture for the long term.

Now building on these achievements, 1984 we believe was a particularly fruitful year for U.S. foreign policy. I would like to review a few accomplishments and look ahead to the second term, and I will focus on four principal areas — East-West relations and arms control, reinforcing our friendships and alliances, peaceful resolution of regional conflicts and the further strengthening of the international economy.

With the Soviet walkout from

the Strategic Arms Reduction talks (START) and Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) talks at the end of 1983, the nuclear arms control process seemed stalled. Now, however, the process has begun to gather new momentum. In the interim, two events — the successful first phase INF deployments in the face of intense Soviet efforts at intimidation, and President Reagan's landslide reelection — communicated the message that one way or the other the military balance was going to be redressed.

This led to renewed Soviet interest in arms control and eventually to agreement on the Shultz-Gromyko talks in Geneva next month. These talks, we hope, will lay the groundwork for an umbrella arrangement under which serious, comprehensive arms control negotiations can go forward.

Our overriding goal remains verifiable agreements leading to significant reductions of arms, nuclear and conventional, to equal, lower levels.

Let me turn now to the subject of strengthening alliances and friendships.

In the past year, our alliances with the industrial democracies have demonstrated their resilience. With the INF challenge largely behind us, priority in NATO will now be given to modernising conventional defences.

Our relations with all the major powers in East Asia and the Pacific — Japan, China, Korea, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand, United States) treaty nations — are strong. We've made considerable progress this year towards working out solutions to our trade problems with Japan. I expect

that this favourable trend to be carried forward when the president meets with Prime Minister Nakasone next month in California.

During his visit to China last April, the president's personal diplomacy contributed to significant strengthening of our relations with China. After a decade of ups and downs U.S.-China relations are now on a stable, pragmatic course.

On the question of resolving regional conflicts, I think we've made progress in the last year toward resolving conflicts on several fronts and here again I think the future can be said to be bright.

Let us take first of all Central America about which so much has been written and said.

The free and fair elections held in El Salvador in mid-1984 and the election of President Duarte, who is a strong and popular leader, was a quantum leap forward in the effort to promote democracy and resist Communist subversion in Central America. President Duarte is playing his political cards skillfully. Thanks to increased popular support and better training and equipment, the Salvadoran Army has become much more effective than before.

Nicaragua, meanwhile, is showing signs of strain. We have actively used diplomatic channels with Nicaragua in support of the Contadora process. We believe a negotiated solution is possible but a Contadora document that doesn't effectively deal with Nicaragua's accelerating military buildup, its military ties to the Soviet Union and China.

In southern Africa during the past year, our patient diplomacy has moved the complex southern

Africa problem closer to a solution (which will) provide independence for Namibia; remove Cuban troops from Angola; and greatly reduce tension in the region. The final settlement is now in sight.

But no lasting peace in southern Africa will be possible until South Africa moves away from apartheid, a repugnant system of legalised racism, to a system that effectively represents the interests of all of its people. We will continue to work quietly but energetically to hasten that day.

In the Middle East I have to say in all candor that it has not been the best year for Middle East diplomacy. Cancellation of the Israeli-Lebanese agreement was a disappointment. But despite that setback all the parties — Lebanon, Syria and Israel — want us to help move negotiations along. Assistant Secretary Murphy has continued to play a useful role behind the scenes.

The parties themselves have to make some tough decisions, but we'll consider increasing our role because that is something that all of them want.

With respect to the wider peace process this has largely been a year of reassessment on both the Israeli and Arab sides. We remain actively alert to opportunities to move the process along whenever the parties are amenable.

Finally, strengthening the international economy: This year has seen significant progress in dealing with three principal international economic problems: Sustained non-inflationary growth, the debt problem, and maintaining an open international trading system.

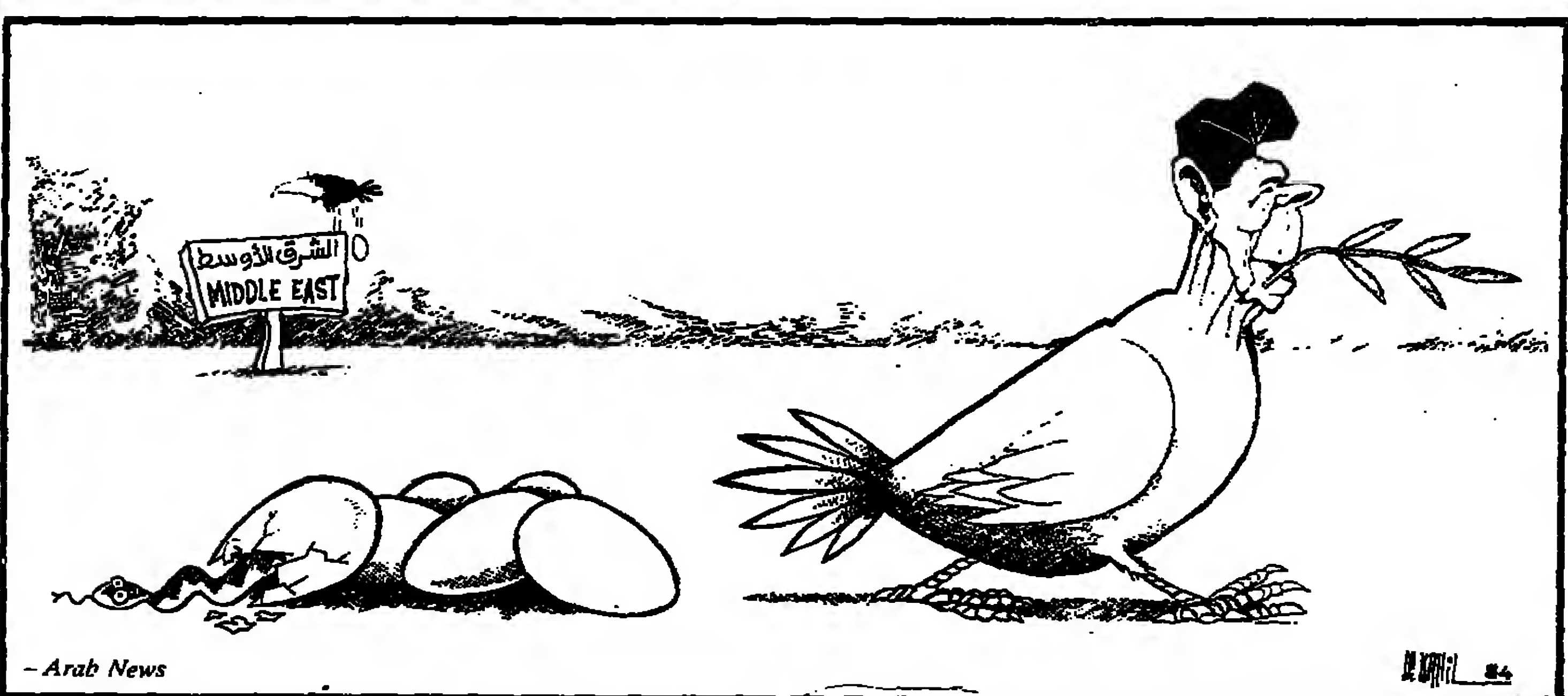
Thanks to the growth rate in our own economy the global economic recovery has taken hold. The London economic summit confirmed the commitment of the industrial democracies to sound growth policies.

We seemed to have turned the corner on the debt crisis thanks to a global economic growth and to the introduction of disciplined economic policies in many of the key debtor countries. One important factor was the tremendous expansion of U.S. imports from less developed countries. Our share increased from 40 to 50 per cent of our total imports. The United States is doing its part to fight protectionism and we believe that at this point we have to say that it is up to Europe and Japan to do the same.

Maintaining an open international trading system is essential for sustaining the recovery we now have and for further easing the debt crisis.

Thanks largely to U.S. efforts the recent General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT) conference in Geneva produced an agreement that could lead to a new round of multilateral trade negotiations to address non-tariff barriers and international trade and services. We will still have to convince those sceptics largely in the less developed countries.

So, in short, we have laid a solid foundation for the future, pursuing our interests with the realistic understanding of the challenges we face. Strength and willingness to negotiate has yielded many short term successes, but more importantly has opened up great opportunities for larger successes in the years ahead — U.S.A.



Saudis may have more say in government

By Nicholas Moore

Reuter

RIYADH — Riyadh is buzzing with speculation that the royal family may again be contemplating a measure of formal popular participation in government in Saudi Arabia.

This would be through a consultative council (majlis shura), probably of nominated representatives initially and possibly of elected members later.

They might be chosen indirectly by existing local councils whose members are selected by the people and approved by the king.

Renewed speculation about a national consultative council followed a recent interview King Fahd gave Britain's Sunday Times, which quoted him as saying he might proceed with plans for such a forum in a few months.

A contract has been awarded for the construction on a desert site near central Riyadh of a royal diwan (audience palace).

The idea of a consultative council was first mooted under the late King Feisal in the 1960s and revived after armed men, officially described as Muslim zealots, seized Mecca's Great Mosque in 1979. Leaders of the abortive rising were later beheaded by the

sword. There are no political parties in Saudi Arabia, where fewer than 10 million people inhabit a land larger than Western Europe.

It enjoins consultation by rulers, and scholars may interpret this as sanctioning an elective parliamentary process.

While there may be dismay among an educated elite at what is occasionally perceived as an arbitrary exercise of royal prerogative, an ambivalent attitude towards "democratisation" sometimes prevails.

"Some of us have our doubts about majlis al shura," one of the kingdom's leading commoners once told this correspondent on condition he should not be named for the comments.

"It is not altogether a joke when we say that we already have a sort of democracy — what has been called 'a desert democracy.' We do not really have an absolute monarchy in Saudi Arabia like the Shah's (in Iran)," he said.

He and others cite, among other things, the right of access to king or princes, at least in theory, of all Saudis, which might be eroded in a parliamentary system.

Saudi Television cameras frequently film the regular audiences

of King Fahd or Crown Prince Abdullah, when citizens queue to kiss the royal shoulder and submit petitions.

The petitions are passed to a secretary. By the end of the day, each gets a reference number which is given to the petitioner to pursue at the relevant ministry or department to which the palace directs the problem.

"It is at least as effective as lobbying a member of parliament in most democracies," a European diplomat said.

Saudis concede that getting in to the royal or ministerial presence may involve hassling with minor bureaucrats. A recent newspaper cartoon showed a supplicant making his bed in front of an official's desk — his case was taking so long, he said, he thought he had better pitch camp there, bedouin style.

Several thousand royal princes comprise the ruling house of Saud. Most, together with prominent non-royals like Oil Minister Sheikh Ahmad Zaki Yamani, keep many retainers, another channel in Saudi society through which grievances may be aired.

Within the royal family, King Fahd, not the senior member by age, governs by consent. Outside, he consults the ulama (Muslim divines) of the austere Wahabite

persuasion of Islam with whom the house of Saud formed an enduring alliance two centuries ago.

Underlying reservations among the elite about flirting with Western-style democracy, as Majlis Al Shura might imply, is pure horror at how more politicised Arab societies have developed since the World War I collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

Iraq and Syria are cited, where present stability under Baathist socialism has been achieved only after a succession of bloody coups d'etat. Egypt's experience under the late President Gamal Abdul Nasser is not envied.

The Saudi Interior Ministry runs a diligent intelligence network and is ruthless with subversives, diplomats say. But in no sense, at least to the visiting Westerner, does Riyadh reek of the fear that pervades some "Third World" capitals.

Still, the thought given to the idea of majlis al shura after the Mecca siege did reflect concern that the royal family was not attuned to opinions and aspirations in some sections of society — in that instance, among uprooted and urbanised bedouin steeped in fundamentalist Islamic ideas current in the religious schools of Mecca and Medina.

West refrains from backing resolution on state terrorism

By Nick Ladington
Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — A Soviet-sponsored resolution condemning "State terrorism" has sparked sharp controversy at the United Nations, spotlighting East-West differences over what the concept of state terrorism means.

The General Assembly approved the resolution Monday by a vote of 117-0, with 30 abstentions, after acrimonious debate on the assembly floor. The abstainers included west European countries and the United States.

Previously, the resolution had caused a sharp debate in the assembly's Political and Security Committee, chaired by veteran Brazilian diplomat Celso de Souza e Silva.

The resolution was titled, "Inadmissibility of the Policy of State Terrorism and any Actions by States aimed at Undermining the Socio-Political System in Other Sovereign States."

East and West each interpreted phrases in the resolution to refer to actions by the other.

Soviet diplomats emphasised the resolution's reference to "undermining of the socio-political system of states." Soviet Ambassador Oleg Troyanovsky, echoed by delegates of East Germany, Poland and other Communist states, portrayed the resolution as aimed at U.S. actions, particularly Washington's harassment of the Sandinista government in Nicaragua and the U.S.-led invasion of Grenada.

"The dirtiest of blackmail and intimidation" are employed, Mr. Troyanovsky said, referring to U.S. policies in Central America, in debate.

In this way the territorial integrity and sovereignty of states are violated, he said, and a military presence in the immediate vicinity of the borders of other states is maintained.

U.S. diplomats concentrated on a phrase eventually incorporated into the resolution — not contained in the original Soviet version — that condemned "military intervention and occupation."

Referring to armed Soviet intervention in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, Ambassador Jose Sotomayor, a deputy to chief U.S. Representative Jeane Kirkpatrick, said on the assembly floor the U.S.S.R. "is determined to maintain its hegemony in East Europe and to dominate other regions on its borders."

The resolution initially was submitted to the General Assembly by Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. Mr. Gromyko's original version said "relations between states, regardless of ideological differences," should be conducted without threats of force or interference in internal affairs. Some diplomats said this implied the prohibitions applied only to dealings between states of different ideologies.

Sir John Thompson, the British ambassador, told a reporter this was "cunningly devised to avoid condemnation of the Brezhnev doctrine," under which the Soviet Union has intervened to uphold Communist rule within its sphere of influence.

The Soviet sponsors agreed to several revisions in the resolution suggested by non-aligned and Western nations, including deletion of the reference to "ideological differences" and the addition of "military intervention and occupation."

Billahat Kausikan, a delegate from Singapore, expressed the views of some non-aligned states when he called the concept of state terrorism "vague, contentious and controversial."

The text revisions ultimately satisfied non-aligned states, including Singapore, but not West German Ambassador Rüdiger Diefenbach, who said the resolution "is not a

His Majesty Sultan Hassanah-Bolkiah, Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Negara Brunei Darussalam and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam Binti Haji Abdul Aziz paid a state visit to Jordan Dec. 19-21. Following is the full text of the joint communique on the occasion.

Talks teams.

3. During the visit, His Majesty The Sultan and His Majesty The King, held wide-ranging discussions that were conducted in a friendly atmosphere and were attended by:

On the Brunei Side,
Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Laila Karim Diraja Pengiran Bahrain Bin Pengiran Hj Abas, minister of law and communications.

4. The discussions covered aspects of the bilateral relations between the two countries, the situation in the Middle East and South East Asia, as well as matters of mutual interest. Particular consideration was given to Islamic affairs and concerns due to the membership of the two states in the Organisation (OIC) of the Islamic Conference. It was agreed that efforts aimed at promoting inter-Islamic cooperation should be intensified. Methods and areas of such cooperation, that had been

The dowry deaths problem in India has been widely and sometimes inaccurately tackled by international news reports. Following is an Indian note prepared by Indian Ministry of Social Welfare on the issue.

THE INDIAN government has implemented plans for tightening of legislation to make punishment of dowry deaths stricter.

All the pending legislations have been finalised. A bill to amend the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, has been passed by both the Houses of Parliament this year. The amendment act makes the offence cognisable, enhances the punishment, both fine and imprisonment and widens the scope of the act to make it more effective. Besides, two archaive, recently been enacted by the parliament amending the criminal laws. The acts amend the Indian Penal Code, the Indian Evidence Act and the Criminal Procedure Code to make the offence of rape

and such other crimes against women including suspected dowry deaths much more stringent and effective and also to make a new provision in the Indian Penal Code to make cruelty against women by the husband and other relations punishable. The onus of proof of innocence would rest on the accused of such offences.

Year	No. of Deaths
1981	197
1982	397
1983	353

It is seen from the above that the number of dowry deaths has come down since 1982.

Highly-exaggerated reports

There is no denying the fact that

(Continued from page 2)

problem and perhaps it will be possible during the coming year to relaunch and intensify the peace process. But this is a question also for the countries of the region.

Again, the United States has the advantage that it's able to talk to the different parties, but it can only encourage them to act. They are the ones who must act.

Question: Samam-Hashbushman (7). British Broadcasting, Mr. Secretary, how do you explain your hope of Lebanon's problem to be a short one in the absence of serious American mediation to resolve the situation?

Mr. Dam: Well, I'm just saying

that the Lebanese problems with regard to the subject that has been headlined "Israeli withdrawal," although there's more to it than that, has generally been viewed as something that probably is going to have to be solved before the peace process can really be fully launched. I think my words were something along the line that it hopefully will be a short-term problem.

One reason for relieving that is that the Israelis have indicated that they're quite prepared to withdraw, provided that there can be adequate security arrangements for their northern border. That seems to me quite a reasonable position. It's a position we support.

5. In reviewing the Middle East situation, both sides expressed their deep and grave concern at the continued Israeli occupation of the Arab territories since June 1967. They totally oppose all Israeli efforts aimed at altering the Arab and Islamic identity of the occupied territories. They also oppose the transfer of Israeli colonies and Jewish settlers in the occupied Arab territories as illegal, contrary to international law and a serious threat to the chances of peace in the area. They strongly condemn Israeli measures aimed at depopulating the occupied territories and consider null and void the illegal steps taken by Israel to annex Arab Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. They call upon the international community to put an end to the Israeli occupation, which has been in effect for the last seventeen years and to desist from its illegal practices in the occupied Arab territories.

6. The two sides affirmed that a just, durable and comprehensive settlement to the Middle East conflict can only be attained through a just solution to the Palestinian problem, which is the core of the problem. Basing themselves on international legality as embodied in various resolutions of the United Nations, the two sides agreed that the foundation for such a solution lies in the implementation of

primarily due to the fact that there is new awareness in India about the cause of women. The Western media have apparently become sensitive to this problem because of the attention this problem has received in the parliament and the press here.

The problem of dowry is a very complex issue. It is an age old practice which has enjoyed religious and social sanctions. The new socio-economic conditions have only made this problem more complicated and this practice more pernicious. The Indian government has been seriously concerned about dowry cases and has taken a number of legislative, administrative and educative measures to curb it. However, the

7. The two sides agreed on the need to exert all possible efforts to secure Israel's full withdrawal from all the Lebanese territories. They support all efforts aimed at allowing the Lebanese legitimate authority to guarantee the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon.

8. The two sides expressed their deep concern at the continuing war between Iran and Iraq. This war which has entered its fifth year has caused massive material damage and loss of human lives to the two neighbourly and Muslim states. It poses grave risks to the security and stability of the region and opens the way for possible

State governments have been directed to strengthen administrative machinery for implementing and monitoring of social legislations including Dowry Prohibition Act, which has been recently amended. Instructions have also been issued to the state governments to ensure that investigation of all cases of unnatural deaths of young married women who died within seven years of their marriage are supervised by senior police officers not below the rank of Dy. Superintendent of Police. The bodies in such a case are not to be disposed of without post-mortem.

Special Anti-dowry Cells have been opened in all states to assist

10. The two sides reviewed the bilateral relations between their countries and expressed complete satisfaction with the brotherly and friendly ties that bind their peoples. The two sides agreed to widen the scope of their cooperation in all aspects for their

Full diplomatic ties

11. They also decided to establish full diplomatic relations between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Negara Brunei Darussalam. They also agreed to

To create social awareness and to bring about attitudinal changes the government has been supporting a massive public media campaign through the mass media against this social evil. All this publicity against dowry in a way is also responsible for its receiving more attention in parliament and in the press. This is to be welcomed, as a social evil like dowry cannot be fought unless it is fully exposed and the society at large is made to realise its evil consequences. It would be wrong to draw the conclusion that government is doing nothing to tackle this problem and that atrocities against women in

12. The Jordanian side expressed willingness to provide assistance in allocating seats in Jordan universities and institutes of higher learning for students from Negara Brunei Darussalam. It also conveyed readiness to provide experts to Negara Brunei Darussalam upon the request of the Negara Brunei Darussalam authorities.

13. The two sides expressed their satisfaction at the friendly atmosphere that characterised their successful and useful discussions.

14. His Majesty Sultan Hassanalkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Negara Brunei Darussalam, expressed his deep

appreciation for His Majesty King Hussein I, Queen Noor and the people and government of Jordan for the warm reception and gracious hospitality accorded to him and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam Binte Haji Abdul Aziz and the Brunei delegation accompanying them on their visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Invitation accepted

15. His Majesty The Sultan and Her Royal Highness extended a most cordial invitation to His Majesty King Hussein I and her Majesty Queen Noor to pay a State Visit to the Negara Brunei Darussalam at Their Majesties pleasure. The invitation was accepted with pleasure.

The problem of dowry is directly linked with the status of women and therefore, the government has also formulated comprehensive strategy for raising their status. A National Plan of Action has been prepared which gives action-point for the central ministries as well as the state governments for development of women. It envisages legislative and administrative measures as well as voluntary action for promotion of education, employment, health care and social and legal rights of women. Some of the protective legislations for women include Hindu Marriage Amendment Act, which has liberalised the grounds of divorce and the Factories Act, the Maternity Benefit Act, the Equal Remuneration Act 1976 and the Child Marriage Restraint Act.

"Yara loves Santa Claus." I find myself obliged to repeat to people around me, and hope, there we are, in the car, looking right and left, our ears open, to hear the sound of the bell which could lead us to this marvelous obese creature with the long white beard.

In fact, and to tell you everything, my little girl could not care less about Santa Claus. At the beginning, he scared her a bit ... this frozen mask, although smiling. And then, she wondered why this bizarre creature was not dressed like everybody else.

Finally, the lolly pop candy that he gave her, managed to coax her to his side. But after the third lolly pop ...

At home, when her father wears the red outfit, the mask with the beard and the hat with the pompom to give her the gifts, my little girl wonders why we are setting all this show; it would be so much simpler to give her the gifts plainly and simply.

In fact I think that Santa Clauses are for adults, because it is them who really need to brighten things around them. It is also them who need to believe in better tomorrows.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

By Christopher Hanson
Reuter

air pollutant in Western Europe. In West Germany, environmentalists asked churches and town councils to display diseased Christmas trees this holiday season to show how cherished woodlands — including the famous black forest — are being ravaged. Bonn says half the nation's forests have been damaged by pollution returning to earth as acid rain — up from eight per cent only two years ago. Scientists claim the woods are irretrievably lost. Other European forests are also hard-hit.

Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark and Iceland have pressed Britain to join them and other Western and Socialist nations in working for a 30 per cent cut in emissions of sulphur — a key component of acid rain — by 1993.

Britain has refused, saying more research is needed on the impact of acid rain — a position echoed by the United States, which is under pressure from Canada to cut air pollution.

At an international conference in London last week, Britain and the United States agreed with

Germany that closer cooperation was needed. But the acid rain dispute appeared no nearer solution.

The environmentalist group friends of the earth says nearly 80 per cent of the sulphur emitted in Britain, chiefly by power stations, is blown towards continental Europe on westerly winds.

A recent British parliamentary report said Britain was the worst air polluter in Western Europe. Much pollution also originates in continental Europe, where, according to friends of the earth, car exhaust is the biggest single offender.



In West Germany, where damage has been greatest, the dying forest is near the top of the list of public concerns.

In Sweden, 18,000 lakes have been poisoned by acid rain, friends of the earth says.

Taj Mahal, Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral and other historic structures.

Western diplomats say they will blow much local pollution away from Britain, making the impact of acid rain less dramatic than the continent and defusing demands for action. In the absence of such domestic pressure, progress in diplomatic efforts to change Britain's policy has been slow.

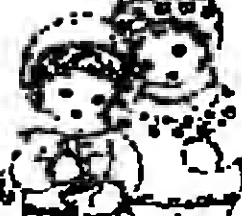
Acid rain has long been a bone of contention between Canada and the United States. Ottawa has called for quick action to stem pollution of lakes, streams, and forests, but Washington, with a much bigger industrial stake, has delayed.


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Everton surrenders lead to Tottenham

LONDON (R) — Tottenham swept back to the top of the English soccer championship Saturday by courtesy of a surprise home defeat for leaders Everton.

Everton, undefeated at Goodison Park in the league since the opening game of the season, lost 4-3 against Chelsea. Welsh international Gordon Davies hit a hat-trick, presenting the visitors with their first away victory of the season.

Tottenham, who led briefly in September, ended Norwich's undefeated home record with a 2-1 triumph and gained a one-point lead in the title battle.

In fact Everton, leaders since Nov. 3, dropped to third place because Manchester United trounced Ipswich 3-0.

Davies was on target for Chelsea in the 10th, 41st and 76th minutes while team-mate Colin Pates scored the third.

But Everton went down fighting. Paul Brackwell struck a 36th minute equaliser, a 69th minute Graeme Sharp penalty closed it to 3-2, then after Davies' third restored the two-goal lead.

Sharp scored from the spot again with a minute remaining.

Garth Crooks fired Tottenham ahead in the 35th minute, then Tony Galvin added a second midway through the second half. A John Deehan penalty, among several in the first division Saturday put Norwich back into the match in the 71st minute.

A penalty by Gordon Strachan and second half goals from Bryan Robson and John Gidman proved too much for Ipswich.

Arsenal looked set to force Everton into fourth place until Les Taylor equalised three minutes from time for Watford.

The Londoners went ahead via a controversial 39th minute penalty scored by Ian Allinson. A linesman flagged for the penalty when he saw David O'Leary held by a Watford defender.

Davies' hat-trick was matched by Aston Villa's Paul Rideout in a 4-0 win over Newcastle. He fol-

lowed Allan Evans' penalty with goals in the 38th, 62nd and 84th minutes.

Lee Chapman went off on a stretcher with a head injury after scoring Sheffield Wednesday's second goal in a 2-1 win over Stoke.

West Ham, scoreless in their last three games, struck twice through Tony Cottee at home to Southampton but still lost 3-2. An own goal by West Ham goalkeeper Tom McAlister and one apiece from Joe Jordan and Danny Wallace proved enough for Southampton.

Only the top four clubs in Scotland's premier division were in action Saturday — leaders Aberdeen lost unexpectedly at home to Dundee United while Celtic and Rangers drew 1-1.

Irish goalkeeper Pat Bonner was Celtic's hero and villain as they dropped a vital point in their bid to catch the pacemakers. He pulled off a magnificent 51st minute penalty save from Cammy Fraser but then dropped the ball at the feet of Davey Cooper who equalised with five minutes remaining.

Celtic led in the ninth minute when Brian McClair slid home the rebound after Maurice Johnston's shot was saved by Peter McCloy.

Aberdeen were left with a three points advantage over Celtic after Richard Gough's 48th minute goal for Dundee United.



MARTIAL ARTS: A Japanese Aikido team arrived here Saturday at the invitation of the Jordan Youth Welfare Organisation. The four-member team comprising of two women and two men will give two displays in the Japanese martial art at Al Hussein Youth City's Sports Palace on

Sunday evening and at Yarmouk University on Wednesday. A special programme has been set up by the Welfare Organisation for the visitors to enable them to visit various parts of Jordan during their week-long visit.

Albania beats Belgium in World Cup

VIENNA (R) — Goals by 21-year-old Mirel Josa and veteran Arben Minga gave Albania an unexpected 2-0 victory over Belgium in their European Group One World Cup soccer qualifying match in Tirana Saturday.

Albania attacked from the start but were unable to penetrate the

Belgian defence until the 69th minute when Josa headed home after the ball had been deflected to him by goalkeeper Jean-Marie Pfaff.

Three minutes before the finish Minga ensured Albania's victory when he netted a centre from

Augustin Kola.

The Belgian's best spell came during the first half after they had weathered Albania's initial burst. But despite the sterling efforts of striker Jan Cuelemans they were unable to break down a tight Albanian defence.

No drastic changes in U.S. Davis Cup set-up planned

NEW YORK (R) — The United States Tennis Association (USTA) do not plan to make drastic changes in their Davis Cup set-up following the Americans' 4-1 trouncing by Sweden in the final in Gothenburg earlier this week.

USTA spokesman Ed Fabricius told Reuters Friday: "Needless to say, we will be sitting down after the first of the year to discuss what is expected from the players in the future but at the present time no drastic changes are planned."

Fabricius said team captain Arthur Ashe had no intentions of leaving his post, and added that Jimmy Connors gave no indications that he would not return with the team next year.

Connors was fined for obscenities and abusing the referee in his opening straight-sets loss to Mats Wilander.

Fabricius said Connors left Gothenburg early, after Sweden took an unbeatable 3-0 lead, under a pre-arranged plan so that

he could be with his wife, Patti. She gave birth to their second child, a girl, in California Thursday, he said.

"Ashe said after the match that he has no intention of quitting," Fabricius said.

Asked if Connors would return with John McEnroe in Davis Cup competition next year, he said: "He certainly has not told anybody in the USTA about that as far as I know."

Fabricius said neither Connors nor any other member of the U.S. team knew that a live microphone had been placed by the umpire's chair by Swedish television.

"We were very upset over the fact that they had a live microphone in the umpire's chair that we were not told about," Fabricius said.

He added that the umpires and the referee knew that the microphone was live but he did not know if the Swedes were aware of it.

Australian fast bowler surprises Windies

MELBOURNE (R) — Teenage fast bowler Craig McDermott made a notable test debut for Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground Saturday when he dismissed three West Indians for one run in the space of seven balls.

McDermott, 19, struck during the afternoon session on the opening day of the fourth test, reducing West Indies from 153 for two to 154 for five.

This proved the low point of the touring side's day, however, and

by the close they were 280 for six with Viv Richards, breaking free from a wretched run with the bat, 82 not out. Richards led West Indies' revival first in a stand of 69 with Clive Lloyd and then in an unbroken partnership of 57 with Malcolm Marshall.

West Indies, three up in the five-match series, lost two early wickets after being put in on a green-looking pitch. They slipped to 30 for two as fast bowler Geoff Lawson had Gordon Greenidge caught in the gully for 10.

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- This contract is partially financed through a loan from the World Bank to the government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Goods and services under this contract shall be of a source and origin in the member countries of the World Bank, Switzerland, Taiwan or Jordan.
- The latest date for submittal of bids will be at 12 noon on Saturday, February 9, 1985. Foreign contractors should submit their technical and financial envelope at least two weeks prior to that date. All bids should be delivered to the Water Authority main office.
- Copies of the tender documents are available at any of the following addresses:

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Minister discusses Irbid's youth, sports activities

AMMAN (Petra) — Means of developing youth and sports activities in Irbid governorate were discussed during a meeting Saturday between Minister of Youth Hani Khasawneh and Irbid Governor Mohammad Al Khatib.

Dr. Khasawneh also discussed with Irbid Mayor Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat possibilities of cooperation between the Ministry and the Municipality in providing sports and recreational facilities for the northern area.

Later, Dr. Khasawneh visited the Yarmouk University where he discussed with President Adnan Badran scopes of cooperation between the university and the sports institutions in Irbid.

Dr. Khasawneh, accompanied by director general of the Jordan Youth Organisation, also visited the site of Hussein Medical Centre in Irbid.

Clubs asked to submit reports

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Youth Hani Khasawneh has requested clubs to provide it with the activities they performed through voluntary works, national occasions and sport activities during the current year. The ministry also asked these clubs to submit their programmes for next year as well as any problems they are facing. The step is aimed at getting acquainted with the clubs' various activities throughout the year, their plans for the next year as well as with clubs' conditions in general.

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(In Colour)

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W. German firms edge out Japan for Chinese contracts

PEKING (R) — West German industrial firms, shouldering Japanese competition, offer a major contract with China Friday announced another deal to build huge steel plants.

Mr. Heinrich Weiss, chief executive officer for the machine-building firm SMS Schloemann-Siemens, said his company was heading a mainly West German consortium to build a \$450-million steel plant in Baoshan (also spelled Baosteel) near Shanghai.

SMS clinched the deal over Japanese industrial giant Mitsubishi, which it also heard an earlier contractor for a cold strip mill at the same plant.

The two-SMS deal, together worth \$2.7 billion (\$870 million), is part of a West German commercial offensive which is threatening one of Japan's backyard

markets and leaving U.S. and other European competitors behind.

In October, West German carmaker Volkswagen also signed a new five-year car production contract and the biggest auto joint venture with China worth \$65 million.

Meanwhile, West Germany, experiencing its biggest export boom in years, is heading for a record trade surplus in 1984 after posting its highest-ever November trade result, preliminary data issued Friday showed.

Exports last month were 16 percent higher than a year earlier, boosting the trade surplus to DM 7 billion (\$2.4 billion), more than double the surplus in November last year, the Federal Statistics Office said.

"The November figures exceed all our expectations," one

Frankfurt-based economist said. The data also confirmed the crucial role foreign sales are playing in West Germany's economic upturn as the international market takes advantage of the mark's weakness against the strong dollar.

One in three German jobs depends on exports.

Economists foresaw this year's trade surplus topping the previous record of DM 51.3 billion (\$16.4 billion, set in 1982, by at least DM 2 billion (\$640 million).

In the first 11 months the cumulative surplus totalled DM 47.9 billion (\$15.4 billion), already overtaking the figure for all of 1983 of DM 42 billion (\$13.5 billion).

The current account — trade, services and cash transfers — was in surplus in November to the tune of a record DM 5.9 billion (\$1.9 billion).

Craxi paints bright picture of economy

ROME (R) — Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi painted a bright picture of the country's economy Friday and said his government planned to keep up its assault on inflation in 1985 after curbing it sharply this year.

"The accounts are continuing to balance," Mr. Craxi told a traditional end-of-year news conference.

He said inflation, which stood at 8.6 per cent for the year ending Nov. 30 compared with 12.8 per cent for the year before that, had been brought down twice as fast as in other Western countries.

"Next year we propose to bring inflation further down," Mr. Craxi said. "There are certain unknown factors and risks. We shall try to reduce the area of risk, to act to prevent inflation flaring up again."

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in a report published Thursday, said Italy's target of a seven per cent average inflation rate for 1985 was over-optimistic as was its public borrowing forecast.

Mr. Craxi, without mentioning the OECD report, said the inflation target was possible and that the budget deficit would overshoot by only five per cent this year, compared with 25 per cent last year and 50 per cent in 1982.

Mr. Craxi said Italy's growth rate, at three per cent this year, was well above the West European average.

There were weak signs of a pick-up in employment but a long time would be needed to tackle the problem effectively, he said.

At a two-hour news conference, the Italian premier defended his controversial tax decree, which has brought private traders out on strike in protest at new government powers to assess their incomes.

He said the measure was aimed "at those who do not pay a lira, or not much more." Promising an income tax cut for workers in 1986, he said: "The more we go ahead with fiscal fairness, the more we can reduce fiscal pressure."

Mr. Craxi complained of Italy's parliamentary system of secret votes which allowed government members of parliament to side with the opposition.

"There is no European country which allows itself the luxury which the Italian parliament does," he declared.

He said that during its six-month presidency of the European Community which begins on Jan. 1, Italy would try to give fresh impetus to the 10-nation grouping "which frankly is at a crossroads."

"Either it manages to consolidate and evolve, or else it risks entering a crisis of stagnation and disaffection which can become a crisis of disintegration," Mr. Craxi said.

Fed lowers discount rate to spur economic growth

WASHINGTON (R) — A decision by the U.S. central bank, the Federal Reserve Board, to cut its discount rate is an attempt to spur economic growth and could lead to lower interest rates for the customers of commercial banks.

The board said in an announcement Friday night it had voted to cut the key rate by half a point to eight per cent, the lowest level for about six years.

The rate becomes effective on Monday.

The discount rate is the interest commercial banks pay when they borrow directly from the Federal Reserve (Fed). It has stood at 8.5 per cent for the past month.

"This action is designed to bring the discount rate into more appropriate alignment with short-term market interest rates," it said in a brief statement.

"It was taken in the general context of the moderation of growth in economic activity since mid-year, continued relative stability or declines in sensitive commodity prices and strength of the dollar internationally," it continued.

The board noted in its announcement that growth in the nation's basic money supply, commonly called M-1, had been sluggish in recent months. The M-1 measure includes virtually all money available for immediate spending.

Administration officials have voiced fears that tight monetary policy could force the economy to falter.

The economy is expanding at a much slower rate now than during the first half of the year, when it recorded an 8.6 per cent annual growth.

The figure for the third quarter was a subdued 1.6 per cent growth rate, while the rate for the current quarter is 2.8 per cent, according to government estimates.

A spokesman for Treasury Secretary Donald Regan, a particularly vocal critic of central bank policy, said Friday's action was appropriate and should help the economy.

The cut was widely anticipated within the financial community. Analysts viewed it as confirmation that the board was eager to pump life into the economy.

Most major banks cut their prime lending rates to 10.75 per cent earlier this week. The prime rate, the interest banks charge on loans to their most credit-worthy customers, has fallen steadily since September when the prevailing rate was 13 per cent.

Some analysts foresee further cuts in prime rates in the near future, perhaps to about 10.25 per cent.

Orders for durable goods rise sharply

Meanwhile, new orders for durable goods rose by an unexpected 8.3 per cent last month, the sharpest monthly gain in four years, signalling further strong U.S. economic activity, the Commerce Department reported Friday.

White House spokesman Mr. Martin Fitzwater called the report good news. "The economy is growing and people are confident. It gives us a bright horizon for next year's economy," he added.

Durable goods are generally expensive items intended to last at least three years, such as machinery, aircraft, cars, televisions or furniture, and demand for durables is considered a useful guide in gauging economic strengths and weaknesses.

The surge, following two months of decline, was mainly due to a flood of orders for military equipment, and even excluding the defense sector, orders rose a solid 3.3 per cent.

Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige said the November rebound more than made up for the declines of 2.6 per cent and 3.3 per cent in October and September.

Commodity producers look set for another disappointing year

LONDON (R)—The 1980s are turning out to be a discouraging decade for countries whose livelihood depends on the raw materials that feed the world's factories or end up on grocery shelves as anything from chocolate cake to cooking oil.

Commodity prices have slipped around four per cent this year from their 1983 levels, analysts at Bankamerica—in San Francisco said in a recent report.

Sugar is languishing at its lowest value in 14 years, copper has sunk to levels not seen since the great depression and grain prices have failed to show any strength despite Moscow's buying spree to make up shortages from its own poor harvests.

Bankamerica's researchers reckon that commodity values may edge up around three per cent overall next year, providing industrial commodity prices rebound enough to offset the two per cent drop expected in the price of agricultural ones. Even then they would still be 25 per cent below their 1980 peaks.

Another headache for exporters is that the traditional bond between commodity prices and world growth is loosening.

Unlike the periods of buoyant growth in the 1970s, prices of non-oil commodities nowadays no longer seem to outpace industrial growth rates.

One reason for the change, said U.S. undersecretary for agriculture Mr. Daniel Amstutz recently, is that farmers all over the world "have more production potential and more incentive to invest. New developments in production technology, aided by genetic engineering, mean that record shattering increases in production may be the exception rather than the rule."

Once again next year, mountains of sugar in Europe will vie with similar mountains in the Far East and Latin America for consumers who are turning more and more to artificial sweeteners for reasons of health or convenience — certainly not cost.

Next year is unlikely to erode the hefty surpluses which pose

the wealthy U.S., where the balance sheets of leading copper producers like Kennecott, Asarco and Phelps Dodge are stained a deep red.

Improved recovery techniques, substitution of materials like plastics and more sophisticated recycling methods will continue to eat into metals' traditional markets next year, analysts say.

At the same time, the high interest rates that make life a nightmare for developing countries trying to pay back mountains of debt also discourage speculators and industries from holding onto commodities whose prices will lag behind.

"Interest rates will stay fairly high and commodity prices will thus stay more depressed than they might otherwise have done," Mr. Young of Landell Mills.

High interest rates have been one reason why prices of precious metals like gold are now at their lowest levels in over two years, a decline compounded, say analysts, by sales of gold by the Soviet Union to pay for much-needed

Tunisian unions step up criticism of government

TUNIS (R) — The Tunisian General Labour Union has stepped up criticism of the government but decided against confronting the authorities by forming an opposition labour party.

In resolutions adopted at Friday night's closing session of its 16th congress, the federation warned it would resort to strikes if workers' buying power continued to be eroded by a wage freeze.

The congress appealed for a resumption of talks with the government but condemned official policy, saying the state was becoming ever more closely linked with Tunisian and foreign capital.

"The government has largely lost its role as arbiter between workers and employers," it charged.

But it decided that the time was not right to form a labour party, an idea long considered by union leaders.

"Reinforcing the (union's) role at national level does not require the formation of a political organisation, but rather the reinforcement of internal unity and the will for autonomy," it said.

Veteran union boss Mr. Habib Achour, 71, emerged in a stronger position from the seven-day congress, which he used as a plebiscite to reconfirm his leadership.

The congress elected him secretary-general by an overwhelming majority, ending the dual leadership dating from the last congress of 1981 when Mr. Achour was under house arrest following a 1978 general strike.

In a further victory for Mr. Achour, it voted to expel some 60 union militants, mainly extreme leftists, who were suspended by Mr. Achour in May after backing wildcat strikes.

U.S., Britain approve winter trans-Atlantic air fare cuts

WASHINGTON (R) — The State Department announced Friday that the U.S. and British governments have formally agreed to approve winter trans-Atlantic air fare cuts, signalling the end of a lengthy legal and diplomatic battle.

Spokesman Mr. John Hughes said the agreement, made in a memorandum of understanding signed Thursday, would lower the typical mid week roundtrip airfare fare between New York and London from the current \$579 to around \$378.

The Justice Department Thursday bowed to British government demands and said it would not bring legal action if British Airways cut trans-Atlantic fares by 35 per cent for the rest of the winter season.

E. Germany to receive \$400 million Eurocredit

LUXEMBOURG (R) — East Germany signed a credit here Friday for \$400 million from Western banks, described by the lead bank as the largest ever arranged for the country from the European capital market.

The Luxembourg unit of West Germany's Deutsche Bank said it arranged the loan for East Germany's Foreign Trade Bank with 40 other Western banks.

No U.S. banks were among them.

A bank spokesman would not disclose the interest rate, but banking sources said East Germany would pay one percentage point over the key rate charged for loans between London banks, now just over nine per cent.

The loan, originally for \$150 million, was increased after heavy oversubscription. It follows West German bank credits for DM 950 million (\$330 million) in July 1983 and DM1 billion (\$350 million) in July 1984.

Banking sources said the latest deal was a sign of East Germany's improved credit rating in the past two years and its ability to repay existing debt, unlike other East Bloc nations such as Poland which have been forced to reschedule loans.

There are no strings attached to the loan that would commit East Germany to buy West German goods, they added.

YOUR DAILY Horoscope

from the Carroll Righter Institute

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, DEC. 23, 1984

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A good day and evening for you to consider the worldly and public aspects of whatever your present interests happen to be and to advance along such lines in a carefully considered way.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) A good day to be with persons who can be of assistance in your general interests, either in a group or individually.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Your hunches are unusually accurate today, so follow them as well as your mature judgment and you can advance very quickly.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) A good day for positive planning of activities for the future so that you can get the most done, so get at this now.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 2 1) Try to be with the most important person you know and get the support you need at this time.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Concentrate on how best to please those who have done you many favors and you come up with the right answer.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) A good day to accept invitations to early holiday affairs or to give a party yourself for associates.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) You can do much to have things more harmonious at home today, so busy yourself early at such. Please your family.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Be sure to mail holiday cards out and buy a nice present for one who means a great deal to you. Get into the spirit of the season.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Try to concentrate on practical affairs and get much accomplished today. Confer with one who understands your position.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) A day when almost anything you do can turn out right so study your finest ambitions and go after them.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) You have many arrangements to make, not only for the holidays, but for the New Year, so get busy early on such.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) An ideal day to see as many friends as you possibly can or plan to see them over the holiday.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY ... he or she will comprehend just how to get before the public and become very popular. There is great organizational ability here and vision to know what is expected by others. Teach to be more cooperative with playmates and not try to take center stage all the time.

THE Daily Crossword by J. & P. Barrick

ACROSS

- 1 History: abbr.
- 4 Philippines: volcano
- 7 Hagard heroine
- 10 Diminutive
- 11 Suffix
- 13 Kind of bomb
- 15 Accomplish
- 17 Money in Thessalonica
- 18 Knowing one
- 19 Jap. people
- 20 Remotely
- 22 Commune near Anhem
- 23 Staggered
- 25 Trammel
- 26 Lity point
- 30 Live a bungler
- 32 Sun god
- 34 Certain weapon
- 35 Politied
- 38 Deer
- 39 Posed
- 42 Schuss
- 43 Pigment
- 44 Antismacassar
- 45 Lobster part
- 47 Purport
- 49 Locust
- 50 Farm denizen
- 52 Mysterious
- 54 Old Italia
- 56 Co-worker: abbr.
- 58 Olive green
- 61 Made laudral
- 62 Scheme
- 64 Correction
- 65 Old-time ending
- 68 Gob
- 70 Gull

DOWN

- 1 "Garies"

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THE BETTER HALF. By Harris

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HARVEY



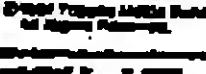
"If you let me paint our windows black, we can save \$7.03 a month on our heat bill!"

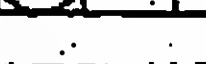
JUMBLE


Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RYFIA 

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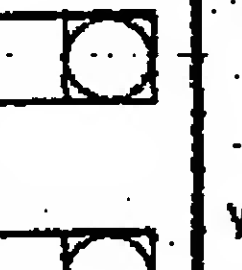
TELIE 

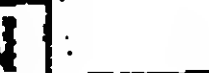

REDOWP 

CLAUHN 

Now arrange the jumbled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

**WHAT THEY CALLED
THAT CROOKED
POLITICIAN
TURNED DOCTOR.**



Answer: THE  as  (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: APPLY CHAIR DIVERT HUNGRY

Answer: What kind of youngster does basketball usually attract? — A VERY HIGH TYPE

Peanuts

I'M REALLY TRIMMING DOWN MY CHRISTMAS CARD LIST THIS YEAR...

MILDRED, DANNY, ESTHER, MABEL, FRED, JOE, LYDIA, VERA, EMIL, FLOYD... I CROSSED 'EM ALL OFF!

I'M DOWN TO ONE LAST NAME...

AND THERE GOES JESSIE!!

JEFF KINNEY

Mutt 'n' Joff

Andy Capp

I'M SORRY, FLO. I DIDN'T MEAN ALL THOSE THINGS I SAID TO YOU!

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, PET. I FORGIVE YOU - IN CASE, I'D TREAT YOU, TO A DRINK IF I COULD AFFORD IT

IF THERE'S ANYTHING HE HATES IT'S A WASTED APOLOGY

Reagan says Moscow does not understand U.S. defence initiative

WASHINGTON (USIA) — President Reagan has attributed Soviet criticism of his strategic defence initiative to lack of understanding of its aims.

Speaking briefly to reporters as he left the White House for Camp David and his Dec. 22 meeting with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Mr. Reagan said he did not see "any morality" in the present theory of deterrence.

Mr. Reagan's strategic defence initiative proposes research into the possibility of creating a defensive system which would destroy incoming nuclear weapons during the space portion of their trajectory. At present, the theory of deterrence holds that because each side is capable of destroying the other with offensive nuclear weapons, a "balance of terror" will prevent a nuclear holocaust.

Asked about criticism of the strategic defence concept from Mikhail Gorbachev, a leading member of the Soviet politburo,

Mr. Reagan told reporters, "... There's probably a reason he doesn't know what he's talking about. He doesn't understand exactly what it is that we're researching. We're going to be very pleased to let them know exactly what it is that we're talking about."

When that is done — presumably in the resumed arms reduction negotiation Washington hopes will follow from Secretary of State George Shultz' Jan. 7-8 meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko — Mr. Reagan said he hopes Moscow will accept the defence concept.

"I think they'll see," Mr. Reagan commented, "that maybe it's better if we have a world in which you've got some kind of a defence that maybe can destroy weapons without killing millions of people."

He noted that now, "the only defensive weapon we have is to threaten that if they kill millions of our people, we'll kill millions of theirs. I don't think there's any morality in that at all." He said his aim is "something that would make those (nuclear) weapons obsolete, so they can be eliminated once and for all."

Mr. Reagan said he is confident he can also explain the nature of his research proposal to such allies as Great Britain and France and quiet European uneasiness with the plan.

The president told questioners there has been progress in trade relations with Japan, but he said much remains to be done. Asked if he had been advised to get "tough" with Prime Minister Nakasone on trade issues when he meets the Japanese leader in Los Angeles on Jan. 2, Mr. Reagan replied, "How can I get tough with

a very good friend?" He said Mr. Nakasone is being "very cooperative" but "he has some of the same problems I do — he has some people in government who don't always agree with what he's trying to do. But we have made great progress... there's a long way to go, and he knows that."

The president said his conservative supporters are incorrect in suspecting that prospective personnel changes in the State Department represent a purge of conservatives and herald a softening of policy.

"I have read all of (the stories), and, no, it's not true," he told a questioner. He said he had discussed all the proposed changes with Mr. Shultz, adding, "most of those are just rotations. The individuals are going from one place to another... there's a limit to how long you prefer to leave, particularly the career ambassadors, in one particular office."



BUSINESS AS USUAL: Two New Delhi snake charmers ply their ancient trade in the shadow of political posters informing of the Indian general elections to be held Monday (AP wirephoto)

U.S. mine death toll reaches 13

ORANGEVILLE, Utah (R) — Rescuers risked the danger of fresh outbreaks of fire and found four more bodies in a coal mine during the night, bringing the death toll to 13.

Fourteen miners trapped since an underground fire broke out on Wednesday are still missing.

Company officials announced the discovery of the bodies about 7 p.m. (0001 GMT Saturday) after rescue operations had been temporarily halted because of fire danger in the mine.

Twenty-six men and a woman were trapped in the mine when

fire broke out in a conveyor belt Wednesday night.

The first nine bodies were discovered Friday about 330 metres into the winding mine shaft, but the rescuers, one of whom described the task as a "journey into hell," were ordered out of the mine temporarily by a federal mine safety official.

Firefighters poured more water on the fire and, after several hours, the search resumed.

There has been no word from the missing miners since they were trapped behind a wall of flame on Wednesday evening. One man

escaped when the fire broke out on a conveyor belt.

From the outset, the mine owners and mining experts said the miners could survive if they moved deep into the 1,000 metre tunnel to escape toxic fumes. Many were equipped with breathing apparatus.

As a rescue effort sagged, arguments ranged over safety records at the mine, situated in a barren stretch of mountains 240 kilometres south east of Salt Lake City.

Richard Trumka, president of the United Mine Workers Union, alleged that the company's push for short-term productivity gains had jeopardised lives.

"Safety is made an afterthought and miners are unnecessarily killed," he said.

But the mine owners' spokesman, while acknowledging that there were problems with safety a few years ago, said the company had improved conditions.

Orchestra violated Redgrave's rights, jurors say

BOSTON (R) — The five jurors in Vanessa Redgrave's suit against the Boston Symphony Orchestra believe the orchestra, which they found guilty of breach of contract, violated the actress's civil rights, according to a letter they wrote to the judge.

The jury found the orchestra guilty of breach of contract last month and awarded Ms. Redgrave \$200,000 on Nov. 9.

At the request of Ms. Redgrave's attorneys, the question of a civil rights violation was left to federal Judge Robert Keeton to decide. But the jury expressed an opinion on the rights issue, in a letter to Judge Keeton, which he has made public.

Ms. Redgrave had contended that the orchestra cancelled her scheduled April 1982 reading of Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* because of her open sympathy with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), thus discriminating against her because of her political views.

The jurors said in their letter that public pressure had been a major factor in the symphony management's decision to cancel the contract.

They said the trial convinced them that the orchestra cancelled her reading because its officials cooperated "in the desire by members of that broader community to fire Ms. Redgrave because, and only because, of the disagreement by that group with political views Redgrave had publicly expressed."

During the trial, a symphony orchestra trustee testified that Ms. Redgrave's reading could have substantially cut future donations from many members of the symphony's Jewish backers.

The jurors said they believed the orchestra management was only "vaguely aware of some controversy connected with her name" when it hired Ms. Redgrave on her merits as an actress.

The jurors said that "those who chose publicly to express their political view by not participating, not attending, withholding funds, should have been thanked politely for having registered their views."

The Boston Symphony Orchestra Friday referred questions to its lawyers, who could not be reached for comment.

Britain's Labour Party slides in opinion polls

LONDON (R) — Labour opposition leader Neil Kinnock, appointed 14 months ago to pull his party out of the electoral doldrums, has ended the year with his popularity at a new low.

The 42-year-old Welshman emerged as the least popular party leader in two out of three opinion polls published this week.

Although all the four main party leaders appeared to have suffered from a general public discontent with politicians, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Party managed to retain a comfortable lead over its rivals.

The Conservative lead ranged from four per cent in the London Standard newspaper Mori Poll to nine per cent in the Guardian newspaper Marplan Poll.

A Central Television poll indicated the two leaders of the centrist alliance parties — David Steel of the Liberals and David Owen of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) — were running neck-and-neck in popularity, with 27 per cent of respondents saying they had had a good year and the Guardian poll showed less than one-in-three voters would choose Labour if a general election were held now.

Forty-nine per cent of respondents in the central poll felt she had had a good year while the other polls put her popularity at between 35 and 41 per cent.

The Guardian poll showed Labour in a serious position and in danger of being overtaken by the Alliance as Britain's second most popular party after the Conservatives.

Commentators put the blame for Labour's poor showing on the nine-month-old miners' strike and the violence that has accompanied it.

Labour had its worst post-war election result in 1983 under the leadership of Michael Foot. Mr. Kinnock and his deputy, Roy Hattersley, were elected on a so-called "dream ticket" to pull together warring right and left factions on the party.

But after a brief honeymoon period, Mr. Kinnock's and Labour's popularity have been on the wane. The Central poll indicated only 22 per cent of people thought they had had a good year and the Guardian poll showed less than one-in-three voters would choose Labour if a general election were held now.

2 killed in Bangladesh strikes

HAKA (R) — Two people were killed and 11 others were injured Saturday when police opened fire at a crowd in the northern Bangladesh town of Rajshahi at the start of an anti-government national strike, a senior official said.

Home Secretary Qazi Ashraf Ali also told Reuters the situation across the country was peaceful and that the 48-hour strike called by the opposition parties had not totally disrupted life.

He said police had arrested some troublemakers throughout the country but gave no details.

Eyewitnesses from the town of Rajshahi told Reuters by telephone that police opened fire when they were attacked by a group of protesters trying to stop a passenger train.

Heavily-armed troops patrolled Dhaka Saturday to keep strike supporters at bay. Police said the city was peaceful except for some minor clashes.

Shops, offices and factories were closed and most vehicles stayed off the roads when the 48-hour stoppage began Saturday morning.

Leaders of two major opposition alliances expressed thanks to the people for what they described as "the unprecedented success of the hartal (strike)". They also called on President Hossain Mohammad Ershad to resign.

"He could not stop this human wave of protests despite using his military muscle," Begum Khaleida Zia, one of the alliance leaders, said in a statement.

"It is a decisive verdict of the people against President Ershad and his military rule. The only way for him to go, and while the going is good," said Sheikh Hasina Wazed, another alliance leader.

The strike started Saturday despite Gen. Ershad's promises last week to end martial law, abolish military courts and prepare for parliamentary elections next April.

Most opposition leaders went into hiding soon after Gen. Ershad issued a martial law order prohibiting political activities for two days starting from Saturday to head off the strike.

Local officials said some trains, buses and steamer services were operating Saturday despite threats by the opposition.

All air services to and from Dhaka were on schedule but airline officials said most domestic flights were empty.

The government earlier issued an assurance that people who went to work Saturday would be protected by the police.

It also imposed temporary censorship on newspapers to prohibit publication of news on the strike.

China expects concrete results from talks with Soviet leader

PEKING (R) — A senior Chinese official said he expected concrete results from trade and economic talks with visiting Soviet First Deputy Premier Ivan Arkhipov, China Daily said Saturday.

Mr. Arkhipov arrived in Peking Friday and plunged into discussions with Chinese Vice-Premier Yao Yilin. Foreign diplomats said Mr. Arkhipov was expected to negotiate a 1986-90 trade agreement and expanded Sino-Soviet technical exchanges.

At a banquet Friday night after their 75-minute meeting, Mr. Yao said he believed the visit would lead to wider cooperation in economic, scientific and technological fields and in trade, China Daily reported.

"We will have serious discussions on these questions in the coming days and expect concrete results from our talks," Mr. Yao told Mr. Arkhipov, the most senior Moscow leader to set foot in China since the then Premier Alexei Kosygin briefly met his counterpart Chou En Lai at Peking Airport in 1969.

The Soviet official, who is seen

as a "friend of China" because of his help in drafting China's first five year plan in the 1950s, is also expected to see other Chinese leaders.

There was no official suggestion Mr. Arkhipov might cut short his visit because of Defence Minister Dmitry Ustinov's death.

East European sources said Mr. Arkhipov was unlikely to leave early as he had arrived after Marshal Ustinov died on Thursday and was not a politburo member like Mikhail Gorbachev, who has curtailed a tour in Britain.

Mr. Arkhipov abruptly cancelled a visit to China in May, in what diplomats saw as anger over Chinese clashes with Moscow's ally Vietnam and a visit to Peking by President Reagan.

But both sides say they stand to gain from increased trade, despite their continuing political and ideological differences.

Before the visit Vice-Foreign Minister Qian Qichen told a Chinese magazine there was very great potential for economic contacts between the neighbouring giants as the Soviet Union needed

China's light industrial and agricultural products, while China needed Soviet timber, steel and heavy machinery.

Sino-Soviet trade is set to rise to \$1.4 billion in 1985 from \$1.05 this year.

China Daily said Mr. Arkhipov's banquet speech touched on the continuing Sino-Soviet differences over international relations, which have remained despite five rounds of talks on the normalisation of relations since 1982.

Moscow regards the growth of military ties between Peking and Washington with suspicion, diplomats said.

In China's view, Soviet backing for the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea, its presence in Afghanistan and its strong military concentrations along China's frontiers hamper the growth of closer ties.

Under Mao Tse-tung in the 1960s China attacked Moscow for "goulash Communism", even renaming the Soviet embassy's address to read "anti-revisionism street".

Craxi says Malta not in Soviet camp

ROME (R) — Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi has said he did not believe Malta had joined the Soviet camp, and he would gladly visit the island once an Italo-Maltese dispute had been cleared up.

Asked at a news conference whether Maltese Prime Minister Dom Mintoff's visit to Moscow this week meant the Mediterranean island had made "an irreversible choice of camp," Mr. Craxi said: "No, I exclude this."

Italian Defence Minister Giovanni Spadolini said on Dec. 12 that Mr. Craxi would soon visit Malta in a bid to resolve a diplomatic row. Italian newspapers

predicted the visit for last Friday, but it did not take place.

Earlier this month Mr. Mintoff said a protocol between Rome and Valletta guaranteeing Malta's neutrality was no longer valid. Maltese officials were quoted as saying Italy must give Malta economic aid if it wanted to guarantee the island's neutrality.

Relations have worsened between the two countries since a four-year agreement under which Rome offered economic aid to the former British colony expired at the end of 1983.

Mr. Craxi said Friday, "my visit to Malta did not take place for the

simple reason that I prefer to fix or agree myself the date for a visit and not hear it agreed by others."

"I will gladly pay a visit to Malta, but I want to make it once we have cleared up the dispute, which is open at the moment," he added.

Mr. Craxi said he recognised that Malta had a point to make about the trade imbalance between the two countries.

"We thought that this problem should be separated from the question of the recognition of Malta's neutrality by Italy, which we considered a permanent factor," he said.

Ex-mafia leader handed over to U.S.

NEW YORK (R) — Mafia informer Tommaso Buscetta has been brought here from an Italian jail and handed over to United States law enforcement authorities, a prosecutor said.

U.S. prosecutor Rudolph Giuliani said Mr. Buscetta was handed to U.S. marshals and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents "on an agreement with the Italian government."

He refused to disclose details in order to protect Mr. Buscetta, who had been held in a maximum security prison near Rome.

Mr. Buscetta, a former mafia chieftain, has vowed to smash the Sicilian organised crime network after losing an inter-clan power struggle. His cooperation with Ita-

lian authorities has led to more than 300 arrests.

U.S. law enforcement agents hope Mr. Buscetta will provide them with equally useful information, especially about the U.S. mafia and its links with the Sicilian crime network, Mr. Giuliani said.

"He is now in a secure place and it will not take a short time to debrief him. We are talking about months," he said.

Judicial sources in Rome said Thursday that Mr. Buscetta would probably be "loaned" to U.S. authorities indefinitely under a new extradition accord between Italy and the United States.

"It is the most significant breakthrough ever made regarding

the operations of the Sicilian mafia and its link to the United States," Mr. Giuliani said.

Mr. Buscetta was last in the United States from 1969 until 1971, when he jumped bail on a narcotics charge, the basis on which he is now being held, the prosecutor said.

He said Mr. Buscetta had useful information about the so-called "Pizza connection" case involving a U.S. heroin ring that operated from Pizza parlours.

Mr. Buscetta will be questioned by both Manhattan and Brooklyn federal prosecutors and will probably prove useful in organised crime probes throughout the United States, Mr. Giuliani said.

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
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A RUFF IN TIME

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 65
♥ 742
♦ A62
♣ AQ853

WEST EAST
♠ KQJ74 ♠ 1098
♥ 106 ♥ QJ9
♦ KJ85 ♦ 1097
♣ K9 ♣ J1072

SOUTH
♠ A32
♥ AK853
♦ Q43
♣ 64

The bidding:
South West North East
1♥ 1♠ 2♣ Pass
2♥ Pass 3♥ Pass
4♥ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♣.

We've never quite understood why anyone should want to climb a mountain simply "because it's there." Certainly at the bridge table you don't want to do anything just because you can — you need a sounder reason.

Normally, 13 points opposite 10 will not produce a game. However, when West announced possession of most of the high cards with his overall, North-South could afford to be aggressive in the auction — knowing the location of the high cards is a boon to declarer in the play. So North-South pushed to the limit and reached the heart game.

West led the king of spades, and declarer made his first good technical play by holding up the ace. West continued with a spade. Declarer won the ace and cashed one high trump. It was tempting to ruff a spade immediately, but declarer realized that would produce only nine tricks, unless clubs divided 3-3 and the king was favorably located.

The ruff was needed as an entry to the table in case clubs broke 4-2. Declarer did not draw a second trump. Instead, he took the club finesse. When the queen held, as expected, declarer came back to hand with a trump and was delighted when both defenders followed. A club to the ace was followed by a club ruff, and declarer's foresight was rewarded when West discarded on this trick.

Now declarer put his spade ruff in dummy to good use as the extra entry. He ruffed another club to set up the board's long card in the suit, crossed back to the table with the ace of diamonds and led dummy's remaining club, on which he discarded a diamond. East could score his master trump whenever he felt so inclined, but that and a diamond to go with the spade trick they had already collected were all the defenders were entitled to.

COLUMN

Bomb squad blows up vodka present

WASHINGTON (R) — Bomb disposal experts blew up two bottles of Russian vodka sent as Christmas presents to a U.S. admiral by a Soviet admiral, because guards feared the package contained a bomb. U.S. Navy officials revealed. They said the parcel was given last Wednesday to bomb experts who concluded after X-ray and sniffer dog checks that it contained two suspicious "liquefied canisters." After it was blown up, the remains of two bottles of Russkaya brand vodka were found inside. A Soviet naval officer brought the gift to the Washington Navy Yard addressed to Vice Admiral James Lyons, deputy chief of naval operations. The navy said it was apparent from Soviet Naval Attache Rear Admiral Ivan Sakulkin, who knew Adm. Lyons from service on joint U.S.-Soviet committee of incidents at sea. Officials said concern over the package was justified because of a bomb blast last April which heavily damaged the navy yard's Officers Club.

London butchers check turkeys

LONDON (R) — Butchers in London shopping centre checked stocks of Christmas turkeys after a poison threat by animal rights campaigners. Health officials told butchers in part of the northern Islington district to look for syringe holes after a telephone warning that the Animal Liberation Front had poisoned pre-packed turkeys in two unnamed stores. The group, formed in 1976 to oppose the use of animals in experiments, last week forced a supermarket in Grimsby, eastern England, to withdraw 50 turkeys following a similar claim.

Reagan is Scottish as well as Irish

LONDON (R) — President Reagan is half-Scottish with an illicit whisky distiller among his ancestors, a British firm tracing his roots said. Burke's Peerage, which traced Mr. Reagan's Irish origins and prompted his pilgrimage to Ballyporeen last year, said he had fourth, fifth and sixth cousins living in Scotland. It said the president had been informed that he has descended from Johnnie Blue, the last moonshine distiller on Kintyre, a peninsula jutting into the ocean from Argyll. Kintyre was also the ancestral home of President William McKinley, assassinated in 1901. As most old American families have Scottish links, Mr. Reagan may at last consider himself a member of the U.S. establishment, according to Burke's director Harold Brooks-Baker. "The White House was very excited by these developments," said Mr. Brooks-Baker, whose firm carried out the research at Nancy Reagan's request. He said Mr. Reagan's maternal grandfather, Thomas Wilson, was the son of John Wilson from Paisley, near Glasgow, and Jane Blue from Kintyre.

Princess absent from royal christening

WINDSOR, England (R) — Three-month-old Prince Harry, third in line to the British throne, was baptised Friday in the atmosphere of a royal ruff. The child's aunt, Princess Anne, snubbed the christening ceremony at 500-year-old St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle, where the bodies of 10 English kings lie buried beneath massive flagstones. Princess Anne and her husband, Captain Mark Phillips, went shooting instead. The Press Association, Britain's national news agency, said a royal rift had finally come into the open over Princess Anne not being chosen as a godmother.

E. German defects in W. German school bus

BONN (R) — A 25-year-old East German escaped to the West in a school bus. West German television reported Thursday. The report, quoting police in the town of Marburg north of Frankfurt, said the man made friends with members of a West German high school group touring East Germany and asked them to take him across the border. The West German youngsters smuggled the man out of East Germany under a bunch of coats piled up in their bus.